THE MASK®

OMNIBUS

JOHN ARCUDI

DOUG MAHNKE

EVAN DORKIN

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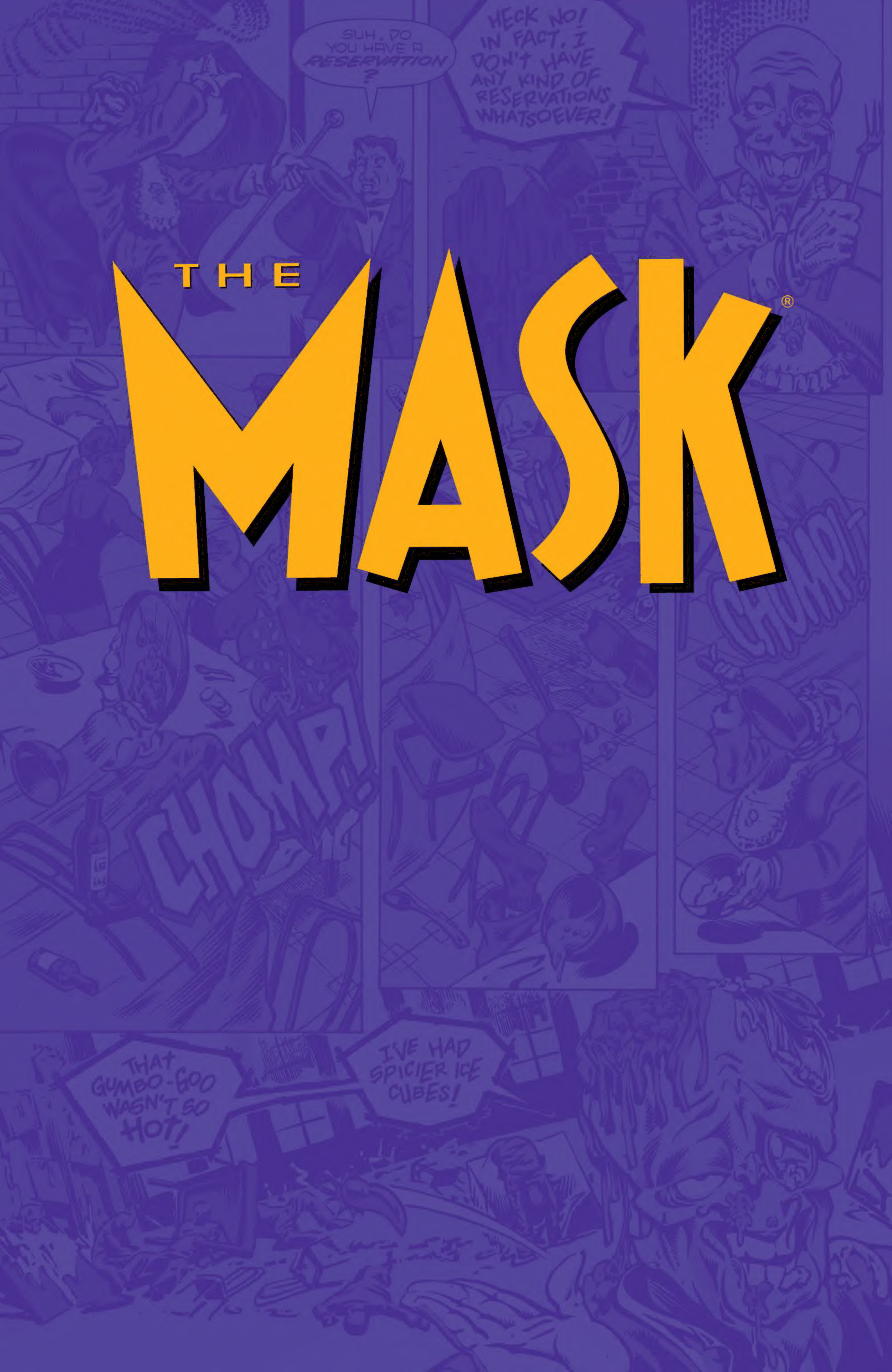
KEVIN MAGUIRE

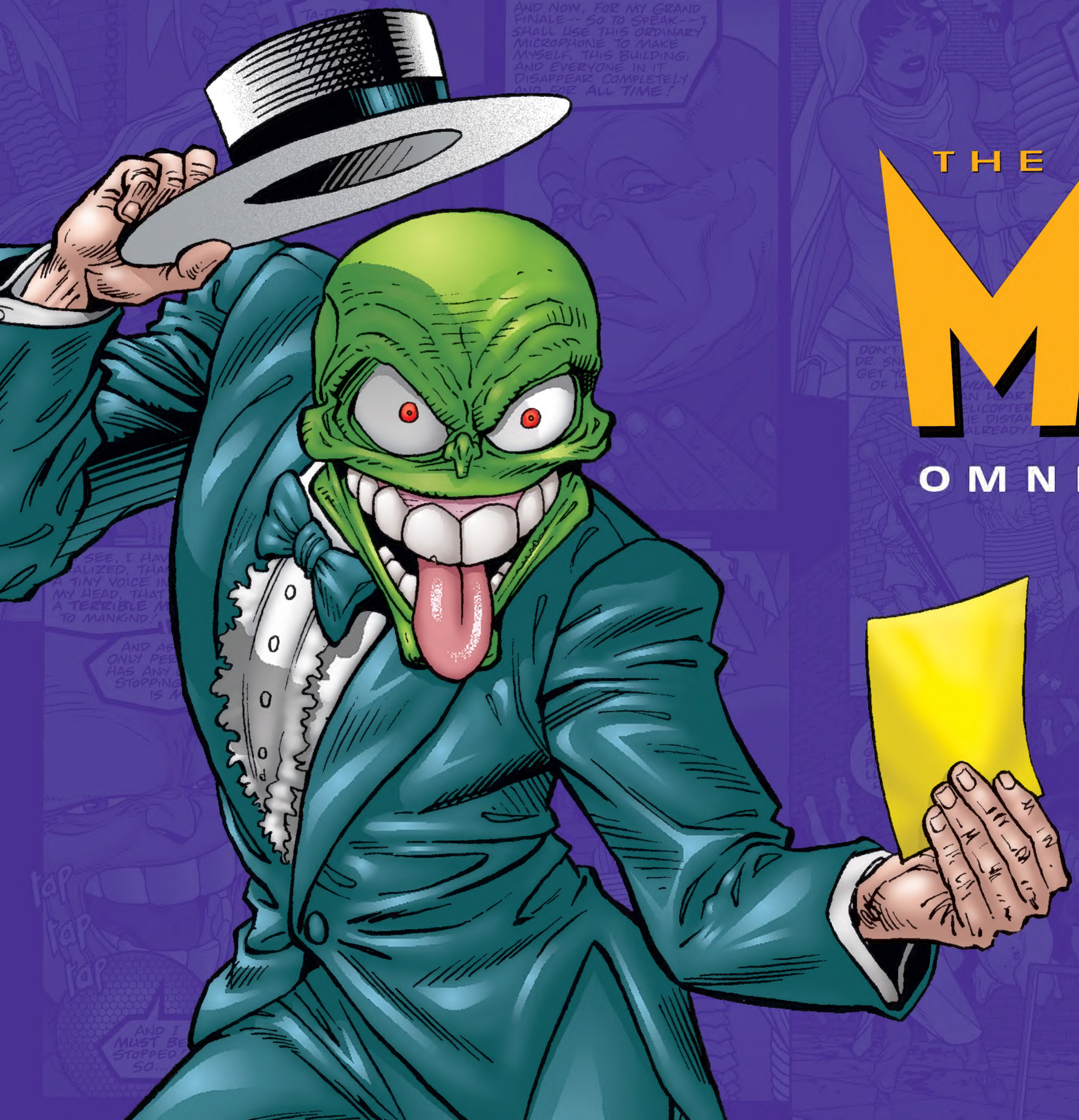
AND MORE OF COMICS' TOP TALENTS!

THE MASK®


SUH, DO YOU HAVE A RESERVATION?
HECK NO! IN FACT, I DON'T HAVE ANY KIND OF RESERVATIONS WHATSOEVER!
CHOW TIME
THAT GUMBO-GOO WASN'T SO HOT!
I'VE HAD SPICIER ICE CUBES!

THE MASK®

OMNIBUS VOLUME 2



DARK HORSE BOOKS

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Facebook.com/DarkHorseComics
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Advertising Sales: (503) 905-2315

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THE MASK® Omnibus Volume 2
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This volume collects material previously published as the Dark Horse comic-book series *The Mask: The Hunt for Green October*, *The Mask: World Tour*, *The Mask: Southern Discomfort*, and *The Mask: Toys in the Attic*; a story from the Dark Horse graphic novel *Decade: A Dark Horse Short Story Collection*; and stories from issues one hundred thirty-four and one hundred fifty-three of the Dark Horse comic-book series *Dark Horse Presents*.

Published by
Dark Horse Books
a division of
Dark Horse Comics LLC
10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222

darkhorse.com

Second edition: August 2019
ISBN 978-1-50671-252-9
Digital ISBN 978-1-50671-257-4

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Printed in China

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THE HUNT FOR GREEN OCTOBER

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THE AMAZON JUNGLE... OCTOBER 29TH...

CHUNG CHUKKA CHUNG CHUKKA CHUNG

CHUNG CHUKKA CHUNG JUNG JUNG

CHUNG CHUKKA CHUK CHUNG CHUKKA CHUK

CHUNG CHUKKA CHUK CHUNG CHUKKA CHUK

CHUNG CHUNG CHUNG

PUM! PUM!

YAAAAAII!

LEBE HOCH, DUMMKOPF...

PUM PUM PUM

WAS?!

CHUNT CHUNT

BRR

ERICH!

BLAM BLAM

THE OTHERS! THEY'RE HERE!!

CHUNT

AGGH!

LA MASCHERA!

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

HAIYAAAA!

SHING

AAAGH!

THUP

HA! HAHAHA! MINE! MINE!!

UND NOW--

--ÜBERMENSCH.

AAAAARGH! AH MEIN GOTT! AXELLL!!

KRUNCH

CRAK

AAAAAH GOTT!! HILFE--

YEEAAARRGH!

KRA-SPLUTCH

HMPHF...

...ANOTHER *FAKE*...

...ALL THIS TROUBLE... *AGAIN*, FOR *NOTHING*...

"...WHERE *IS* THIS DAMNED *MASK?*"

SORRY, MA'AM--BUT I REALLY CAN'T USE ANY OF THESE ITEMS--

OH, PLEASE--CAN'T YOU SPARE *SOMETHING* FOR THEM? EVEN A FEW DOLLARS?

WELL, I DON'T KNOW. MIGHT BE ABLE TO SELL THE KID'S GARAGE, MAYBE THE DOLL--

THE DOLL'S NOT FOR SALE!

UM, THIS MASK IS... *INTERESTING.* LOOK, TELL YOU WHAT, HOW ABOUT FIVE... *SIX* BUCKS? REALLY ALL I CAN SPARE, MA'AM.

THANK YOU, YOUNG MAN--*BLESS YOU.*

=TCH= *DAMN!* CALL ME MR. BUTTER-FINGERS. SORRY 'BOUT THAT--

CHANG

OH, YOUR *HANDS!* I'M SORRY... WAS IT AN ACCI-DENT?

UMM, YEAH. A VERY BAD ACCIDENT, ACTUALLY... MY WIFE...

...SHE, UH...

... IT'S A LONG STORY.

I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO UPSET YOU. I LOST MY ALBERT TWENTY YEARS AGO--

SUFFI DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, MA'AM, IT'S OKAY.

WE'RE GETTING BY, MY DAUGHTER AND I. AS THEY SAY, "*LIFE GOES ON*"...

HEY, DUMMY EMILY-- AIN'TCHA GONNA SAY GOOD-BYE?!

NICE PLACE YA GOT THERE, DUMMY!

HAHAHA

DAMN KIDS...

SUCH A *PRETTY YOUNG GIRL!* WHAT A LOVELY PRINCESS YOU'D MAKE THIS HALLOWEEN!

LOOKING FORWARD TO TRICK-OR-TREATING?

UM, YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE HER, MA'AM, BUT EMILY DOESN'T, UH...

...SHE DOESN'T *SPEAK.*

WELL, LISTEN, EMILY, DON'T YOU LET THOSE MEAN CHILDREN *BOTHER* YOU--

--YOU JUST PUT ON A *HAPPY FACE!* YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW MUCH IT CHANGES THINGS!

THANKS AGAIN, YOUNG MAN. *YOU TAKE CARE, YOU AND THAT LITTLE GIRL!*

THANKS... I WILL...

BOY, AM I AN EASY TOUCH... WHAT A PILE OF *CRAP.* I DIDN'T EVEN *MAKE* SIX BUCKS TODAY.

AT LEAST I GOT TODAY'S PAPER. LET'S SEE, MAYBE THEY'RE GIVING OUT HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOLI--

LON CHANEY
LAUG
CLO
LAUG
A LORETTA YO
HERBERT BRENON PRODUCTION

OH, NO... THIS *CAN'T* BE...

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT... AFTER ALL WE'VE BEEN THROUGH, NOW *THIS...*

BETTER NOT LET EMMY SEE THIS PAPER...

Sky City Gazette
October 29, 1995
City's First Casino Set To Open
Gala V.I.P. Opening Tomorro
yway International H
Come-Back Entre
Nelson Hathaw
Dream Pala

HOW CAN I EXPLAIN TO EMMY THAT THE SCUM WHO CAUSED HER MOTHER'S DEATH IS THE TOAST OF SKY CITY? GOD--

--I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF!

SO HE'S BUILT A CASINO... FIVE-MILLION-DOLLAR JACK-POT SLOT, GRAND OPENING. WHAT A WORLD. JUST WHAT WE *NEEDED.*

HOW ABOUT ANOTHER GOURMET *COFFEE-HOUSE,* HATHAWAY?

SOME MORE *THEME RESTAURANTS--* SHODDY AMUSEMENT PARKS WITH UNIN-SPECTED RIDES...

MERRIEST THIN MAN HAVE A BABY!

NOT *FAIR...*

...IT'S JUST NOT *FAIR...*

LATER...

SEE, EMILY? THAT'S *SAMO HUNG* -- HE'S JACKIE CHAN'S FRIEND! WAIT, *WATCH THIS*-- *SPINNING SIDE KICK!*

1023 Ave

SKY CITY SECOND-HAND THRIFT SHOPPE
Roy Tuttle, Proprietor

WHAK

HAAA

THAK

WHAM! PRETTY GREAT, HUH?! JACKIE'S NO JIMMY STEWART, BUT HE'S SOMETHING ELSE, HUH, EMILY?

CHING! HAK! WYAA!

HEY, UH, I WAS THINKING, KIDDO--I GOT THIS DOPEY MASK TODAY...

...I BET I COULD USE IT TO MAKE YOU A WITCH OR A KITTY FACE IF YOU'D LIKE TO GO TRICK-OR-TREATING THIS YEAR... Y'KNOW?

WELL, YOU PROBABLY WANT A *REAL* COSTUME, NOT SOME *HOMEMADE* THING.

TELL YOU WHAT! WHEN WE WIN THE LOTTERY TONIGHT, I'LL GET YOU SOMETHING REALLY SWELL! *HOW'S THAT?*

YEAH...WOULDN'T *THAT* BE SWELL. WIN THE LOTTERY ...GET OUTTA THIS MISERABLE PLACE ...*THIS ROTTEN, STINKIN' TOWN...*

...GET YOU INTO A *PRIVATE* SCHOOL... AND SOME *GOOD* DOCTORS... GET SOME BIG-SHOT LAWYER TO GO AFTER THAT CASINO-BUILDING *S.O.B.* WHO HURT MOMMY--

SWEETIE, I'M SORRY! LOOK, DADDY'LL SHUT UP! C'MON, WE'LL DO SOMETHING ELSE, *OKAY?*

WE COULD PLAY A GAME OR WE COULD--

GOOD NIGHT, SWEETIE...

...I LOVE YOU.

SLAM!

PHONE DISCONNECT NOTICE

PAST DUE

ALL NEW!

TARZAN *Finds A SON!*

WEISSMULLER

O'SULLIVAN

--AND THOSE ARE TONIGHT'S WINNING LOTTERY NUMBERS! NOW STAY TUNED FOR A W-SCK NEWSBREAK!

WELL, THAT'S *THAT*-- BACK TO THE OLD *DRAWING BOARD.*

NOT THAT THESE *CLAWS* OF MINE DRAW SO HOT *THESE* DAYS.

WELL, THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT GOES, I GUESS. SOME GUYS GET *RICH...*

...SOME GUYS GET THEIR *HANDS CRUSHED* BY A *MERRY-GO-ROUND.*

CAN YOU BEAT THAT? ONE STUPID LI'L MERRY-GO-ROUND RIDE AN' IT'S ALL OVER!

=BURRP=

CLUNK

AW, MADD... MY POOR MADDY...

YOU ALWAYS LIKED THIS DRAWING...SAID WE DIDN'T NEED THE CAMERA WHEN I COULD DRAW YOU SO PRETTY...

NOW I CAN'T EVEN HOLD A FREAKIN' PENCIL!

--AND FINALLY, THE ENTIRE *TOWN* IS *ABUZZ* ABOUT TOMORROW NIGHT'S *POSH GALA OPENING* OF SKY CITY'S FIRST *GAMBLING CASINO*--

& NEW! THE FIRST TARZAN PICTURE IN 3 YEARS!

SON!

SMULLE ULLIVA

JOHN SHEFFIELD
K HUNTER
NRY STEPHENSON
A WESCOTT
WILCOXON
DAY

Mayer

THE CASINO IS THE *BRAIN-CHILD* OF DEVELOPER *NELSON HATHAWAY*--

--NEWLY DUBBED THE "*COMEBACK KID,*" RECOUPING AFTER HIS BOARDWALK AND PIER VENTURES FELL INTO BANKRUPTCY *FIVE YEARS AGO*--

--RECOUPING? *COMEBACK KID* ??

MY WIFE ISN'T COMING BACK, YOU SCUMBAG!

MY KID'S LIFE ISN'T RECOUPING AFTER SHE WATCHED HER OWN MOTHER DIE BEFORE HER EYES!

KRAK

BRUNT

THE S.O.B. DECLARED BANKRUPTCY TO AVOID HIS RESPONSI-BILITY! HE HAD MONEY!

HOW ELSE COULD HE BUY EVERY-ONE OFF TO COVER UP EVERY-THING?!

CRASH

BANG

SMASH

EVERY-ONE GOT SOME!

YEAH, RIGHT... *TRICK OR TREAT*, RAY. *LIFE'S* A WRECK, SO'S YOUR *HOUSE*...

HAPPY HALLO--

WEEEEEE!!

...EVERYONE BUT THE PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES WERE *RUINED*...

...S'NOT FAIR... COULDN'T SAVE *YOU*... CAN'T HELP *EMMY*... CAN'T HELP *ANYONE*...

=SNIF= HUH, *GREAT*. I BREAK EVERY-THING IN THE PLACE, AND *THIS* UGLY THING'S STILL IN ONE PIECE...

YOU! IN THE MIRROR!!

SP. FX

LOOOKIIING GOOOOD!

WAITAMINIT-- *HOLD ON HERE!* THIS IS EITHER ONE TRULY TWISTED OPPORTUNITY KNOCKING HERE... OR I COULD BE GOING *CRAZY!*

PROBABLY BOTH! OKAY, MR. PEABODY, I'M READY FOR MY CLOSE-UP!! ANNNNND-

ACTION!

KKRAKK

THIS IS WILD! LOOKIE, MA- MY HANDS ARE OK!

I COULD DO ANYTHING WITH THESE HANDS!

STUPID THINGS!

THE TAKING OF SKY CITY, ONE, TWO, THREE. SCENE #1, TAKE: EVERYTHING DIR: ME, MYSELF, AND I HATE YOU!

SPLASH

BANZAI!! THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO!

tinkle

FRESH

HMMMM, NOW WHY AM I *YELLING*?! AND WHY'D I JUMP OUT THE WINDOW?

AND HOW COME ALL THIS *GLASS* STUCK IN ME DOESN'T HUR--

OH, MY GOD!

I DIDN'T SEE HIM! HE JUST SAILED OUTTA NOWHERE!

ALL RIGHT? 'COURSE HE AIN'T *ALL RIGHT*, CARL! YOU *FREAKIN'* RAN HIM OVER!

OH, JEEZ, MISTER, YOU *ALL RIGHT*?!

ALL RIGHT? ALL RIGHT? I'M MORE THAN ALL RIGHT--I'M INDESTRUCTIBLE! INVINCIBLE! INCREDIBLE!

FUNNY BONE

SPROING

!!!

INCONCEIVABLE, EVEN.

THANKS FOR SETTING ME STRAIGHT, CITIZENS! I'M MIGHTY-MIGHTY! EVERY-THING'S GONNA BE HUNKY-DORY NOW!

MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY

UHH... BUT...

TUT, TUT! REST ASSURED, GARBAGE-MEN! THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU IN MY NEW WORLD ORDER!

HEY! OUR TRUCK!

DO NOT PANIC! IT'S FOR THE CAUSE!

I'LL HAVE IT BACK REAL SOON! PROMISE!

SKY CITY

REAL SOON...

WAHOOO! MALACHI! THEM DARN DUKE BOYS!

KRA-OOM

MY CAR! THAT'S MY CAR! YOU--

THINGS TO DO LIST

1. 2. 3.

YES, I SMASHED IT! BECAUSE THIS IS WAR! AND STUFF GETS SMASHED IN WARS!

OKAAAY, BUT I GOTTA MAKE THIS FAST. I'M AT WAR, YOU KNOW.

OH, YEAH, MAN? WELL TAKE THAT *STUPID HALLOWEEN MASK OFF* SO I CAN *SMASH YOUR DAMN TEETH IN!*

THINGS TO DO LIST

1. INSURANCE CO.

AW, JERRY-- I DON'T *LIKE* THIS-- *IT AIN'T NORMAL!*

Perfume Shoppe

ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP ZIP

THAT'S RIGHT, PUPPIES! RUN! RUN, WHILE YOU STILL HAVE LEGS!

THIS WHOLE STINKIN' TOWN OF VULTURES, PIGS, AN' PARASITES BETTER RUN--

WAK WAK WAK

--CUZ I'M DECLARIN' WAR ON SKY CITY, Y'DIG?!

I'M HERE TO CLEAN UP THIS STINKIN' TOWN! PEEEEYOOEY!

WHAT A STINKHOLE! THEY CAN SMELL THIS TOILET IN BUDAPEST!

SAAAY... THAT'S JUST WHAT THIS PIT NEEDS--SOME OVERPRICED, FANCY-SHMANCY DEODERANT!

SSSSSSS

Charnel No. 9

THIS WON'T GET THE SMELL OUT ENTIRELY--

--BUT, IT'LL SUFFICE--

CHWA-

BOOM!

--FIRE IN THE HOLE!!

AHHHH, THE SMELL OF IT! SMELLS LIKE --SNIF SNIF

--VICTORY! OR... TAMMY-FAYE BAKKER ON A SPIT! WHATEVER, I LIKE IT! SICKLY SWEET AND YICKY!

NOW, WHERE TO NEXT? AHHH, YAY-ESS--

"--OUR ILLUSTRIOUS FINANCIAL DISTRICT!"

WHAT'S HAPPENIN' HERE?!

WHEEEOOOO

WHOOP WHOO

SOME MANIAC--IN A TRICK-OR-TREAT OUTFIT IS TEARIN' UP ALL THE OFFICES--

--WRECKIN' FILES AND COMPUTERS, WITH, GET THIS--

WAIT! LET ME GUESS!

WHO THE-- WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?

SKY CITY POLICE

A GIANT MAGNET!! AM I RIGHT?

YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE ME? MOI? I'M FRANCE CONSIDERED A GOD!

ONNA GROUND! GET'M ON-NA GROUND, DAMMIT!

I'M THE ANARCHY POSTER CHILD! I'M THE CHAMPION OF THE COMMON MAN! COMMON WOMAN, TOO! I'M YOUR WORST FILL-IN-THE-CLICHE! ETCETERA, ETCETERA!

HE MUST BE ON P.C.P.!

ACME

WAP SMAK CRAK

SAY! HAVE I SHOWN YOU BOYS MY MAGNET? FUN AT PARTIES AND ABSOLUTE HELL ON COMPUTERS! AIN'T IT ATTRACTIVE?!

CLANK CHINK CHINK KLINK

'BYE, NATURE BOYS! CAN'T PLAY NO MORE--

"--I GOT PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE TO BEAT!"

STUDENT SPECIAL-- BOTTOMLESS CUP OF COFFEE!

INHUMANITY, *INHUMANITY!* *LOOK AT YOURSELVES!* THERE IS A *HUMAN* IN THERE!

RIGHT ON!

EVENIN', COFFEE NON-ACH'EVERS! I'M HERE TO-NIGHT TO GIVE YOU AIMLESS KIDS SOME DIRECTION AND PUR-POSE IN LIFE!

AND SOMETHING NEW TO WASTE YOUR PARENTS' $$$ ON--

--HOSPITAL BILLS! OUCHIE! INJURY TO EYE MOTIF!

BAD TO THE LAST DRIP

ARRGHH!

GOOD LORD! I'VE SPILLED THE "BOTTOMLESS CUP OF COFFEE"! I RUN FOR THE HILLS!

TOYBOAT-TOYBOAT-TWYBUTT ...HMM, THAT IS HARD TO SAY...

AAAGH! IT'S BURNING!

DUNK

FLOOSH

SPLOOSH

PUT PUT PUT

SOON, AT THE ASTORIA OPERA HOUSE...

♪ LA LA LA HMM HM HMMM--

PLEASE! ENOUGH! STOP THIS! I BEG OF YOU, STOP THI--

SHHH. OKAY, POPS, RELAX.

JUST ONE MORE THING--

HA HA HA HA!

NOW IT'S OVER!

PLEASE, PLEASE, NO APPLAUSE- JUST THROW UP!

AND SO IT GOES FOR SKY CITY'S NIGHTLIFE, UNTIL:

VACANCY
EMBASSY
GUNS KNIVES SECURITY SYSTEMS
N$

GUESS THAT'S ENOUGH FOR NOW. TOMORROW I'LL--

HELLLP!

HELP?

SKY'S THE LIMIT

UM, EXCUSE ME, MISTER THIEF?

I THINK YOU'RE MAKING ONE HECKUVA BIG BANKING ERROR HERE--

WHAT?! HEY, STUPID-- WHATTAYA, SOME KINDA CLOWN?

instantCash

OOF

NO, DUMMY--

SKY CITY 100% DRINKING

--HE'S A VENTRILOQUIST-- HA HA HA HA!

WHOOPS! CAR-54! 1-ADAM 12! HAWAII 5-O!

CAN'T KISS YA NOW, LADY! GOTTA RUN--

"--BIG DAY TOMORROW!"

BONK!

YOU ARE ENTERING SKY CITY! WELCOME TO THE WONDER BY THE COAST WHERE THE SKY'S THE LIMIT!

YOU TAKE CARE. YOU AND THAT LITTLE GIRL. THEY'RE *COMING FOR IT,* YOU KNOW...

...COMING FOR *YOU*...

OH, *MAN,* WHAT A *NIGHTMARE!* NO MORE BOOZE FOR ME I *SW*--

--CONFIRMATION THAT THE SO-CALLED "*BIG-HEAD*" *KILLER* HAS RE-SURFACED, THIS TIME IN *SKY CITY,* WHERE HE WENT ON WHAT POLICE DESCRIBE AS A "*CAMPAIGN OF TERROR*"--

OH, BOY...

--THOUGH THERE WERE **NO** DEATHS, LAST NIGHT'S RAMPAGE LEFT OVER **THREE HUNDRED INJURED**, WITH DAMAGES ESTIMATED IN THE **MILLIONS**--

IT'S NO DREAM--I **DID** THAT! **I'M THE BIG-HEAD!**

--THE INJURIES RANGE FROM FIRST-DEGREE **BURNS** TO MULTIPLE **FRACTURES** TO ONE MAN WHO AT THIS HOUR IS UNDERGOING **SURGERY** TO HAVE A **TRUMPET** REMOVED FROM, UH, PART OF HIS BODY--

--IN AN ODD TWIST, THE FUGITIVE WAS MOMENTARILY CAUGHT ON **TAPE** BY AN A.T.M. CAMERA WHILE HE HELPED PREVENT AN ARMED ROBBERY--

WHAT DO I DO **NOW**? OKAY, I **SAVED** SOMEONE, OKAY, SO THIS TOWN **SUCKS**--BUT WHAT IF I LOSE CONTROL? WHAT IF EMILY--

EMILY...?

SHE SMILED! BIG-HEA-- I MADE HER SMILE!

FORGET THIS ROTTEN TOWN-- I'D TAKE ON THE **WHOLE WORLD** FOR THAT SMILE--

"--I'M PUTTING THAT MASK ON AGAIN!"

REALLY? YA GETTIN' OFF AT **SKY CITY?** NOT ME, BROTHER!

GOT BUSINESS IN CHICAGO-- NO GREEN-FACED NUTS **THERE!**

SO, HOW'S 'BOUT YOU? **BUSINESS** OR **PLEASURE**, UH--

--SAY, NEVER DID GET YER **NAME**, PAL--

KELLAWAY. LIEUTENANT KELLAWAY.

BUSINESS.

KYOTO, JAPAN... OCTOBER 30TH...

NETT! WUNDERBAR!

THIS IS JUST FINE!

WEEEOOWEEEOOO

BLAM! BRRRRT

ANOTHER WILD GOOSE CHASE--UND ANOTHER VERRÜCKT FIREFIGHT!

BRRRRRT

BUDDABUDDA

CHING

STOP YOUR GIRL CRYING, KURT, OR I'LL SHOOT YOU MYSELF!

CH-KUK!

WE'RE *ALL* SURPRISED THE OTHERS ARE HERE! SO DO WE *ARGUE* OR DO WE MAKE THEM *REGRET* THEIR *MEDDLING*?!

BLAM

AAGH!

AXEL! POLICE!

GOOD! LET THEM AND THOSE DAMNED *YAKUZA* KILL ONE ANOTHER!

BLAM! BLAM!

WITH ANY *LUCK* THESE *OTHER FOOLS* WILL BE KILLED AS *WELL*!

TSING

SHING

KURT! BEEILEN SIE SICH! ENOUGH, DAMN IT! IT'S NOT HERE! WE'VE LOOKED, THEY'VE LOOKED --

COME NOW OR WE LEAVE YOU!

HEINRICH! KILL THE INFORMANT! THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE THEATER!

WHAT?

JA... I UNDERSTAND. JA. SIEG HEIL!

THEY KNOW WHERE IT IS. SOMEONE *USED* IT... SOMEONE IN THE *STATES*.

OH, *TRULY*? BUT DIDN'T THEY JUST SAY *JAPAN*? AND BEFORE THAT *PERU, THAILAND, MA--*

THEY'RE *CERTAIN* THIS TIME, KURT! *IT WAS ON CNN!*

THE OTHERS WILL SURELY KNOW -- SO WE MUST MOVE *IMMEDIATELY*. THE ARRANGEMENTS ARE ALREADY UNDER WAY.

OUR DESTINATION IS *SKY CITY*. THAT'S WHERE THE *MASK* IS--

"--AS WELL AS OUR *DESTINY*!"

EMILY TUTTLE! YOU'RE DAYDREAMING AGAIN!

OH, LOOK, CLASS! OUR MS. TUTTLE SEEMS MORE INTERESTED IN THIS CRIMINAL THAN WITH THE FATHER OF OUR COUNTRY--
--I'M SORRY TO INFORM YOU, MY DEAR, IN THIS CLASSROOM, WE DEAL WITH THOSE WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO OUR SOCIETY, NOT THOSE WHO WOULD TEAR IT DOWN.
EMILY LOVES TH' BIG-HEAD! HA!
HA HA HA HA
BRRRRRIIIIIIIIIINNNNNNNNGGGGGGG
ALL RIGHT! THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY! NOW DON'T FORGET, OUR HALLOWEEN PARTY'S TOMORROW!
WE'RE GOING TO THE PARADE AFTERWARD, SO BRING A WARM COAT! AND REMEMBER WHAT PRINCIPAL DAVIS SAID--NO VIOLENT COSTUMES!
AS FOR YOU, EMILY, I THINK I'D BETTER SPEAK TO YOUR FATHER ABOUT THIS FASCINATION WITH--
HALLOWE PARTY!
--BIG-HEAD, BIG-HEAD--
EMILY LOVES THE BIG-HEAD!
HAPPY HAL
SO WHAT-TAYA SAY, EM? HAH?
HA-HA! ASK THE DUMMY WHAT SHE GOT TO SAY! GOOD ONE, MIKE!
HAHAHA
MAN, THAT DUMMY CREEPS ME OUT! WHY CAN'T SHE BE IN A RETARD CLASS OR SOMETHI--
AHEM YOU KIDS GOT HALL PASSES?
WHAT'S IT TO YA? YOU AIN'T NO HALL MONITOR!
YOU GOT ME THERE, PAL, I'M NO HALL MONITOR--

I'M THE HELL MONITOR!

AAAAH

SO SHOW ME YOUR PASSES ☆@!⚡ OR I'LL EAT YOUR %☆⚡@!#⚡ BRAINS!!

ATTENTION SKY CITY! BOYS WHO PICK ON GIRLS WILL BE BARBECUED!

GLAD I DECIDED TO KEEP AN EYE ON EMMY TODAY. THOSE STINKERS HAVE PICKED ON HER FOR *MONTHS*...

HA! THIS WHOLE *TOWN* BETTER THINK TWICE BEFORE MESSING WITH A *TUTTLE!*

MAYBE I SHOULD PAY THOSE KIDS' *PARENTS* A VISIT WHILE I'M AT IT -- WITH A *BLOWTORCH!*

WHOA! IZZAT THE TIME?

TO DO
1. BULLIES
2. DINNER
3. CASINO

MUST ZOOM OUTTA HERE! BIG NIGHT TONIGHT! STUFFING AND POTATOES!

HA HA

SCHOOL BUS

VRRRMM!

GANGWAY, PRE-PUBESCENTS! CAN'T YA SEE I'M ZOOMING HERE?

YOU KNOW WHAT TONIGHT IS?

OF COURSE YOU DON'T, YOU SILLY DUMMY! TONIGHT IS EXTRA-SECRET, ULTRA-KEEN, HYPER-NIFTY REVENGE NIGHT!

BUT FIRST-- GOTTA MAKE DINNER FOR MY KID!

KRUMP

BRRM BRRM

CRESH

WHAT'S THIS?! IS EVERYONE GOIN' TO MY PLACE FOR EATS?

KRACHUNK

UP YOURS!

NORTHSHORE FREEWAY

AOOGA! AOOGA!

HEY, YOU JIVE TURKEYS! CAN'T YOU SEE I'M DRIVING HERE? MOVE IT!

TOO MUCH TRAFFIC!

IT'S MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY! ATOMIC BATTERIES TO POWER! TURBINES TO SPEED!

COME MR. MONSTER TRUCK, SMASH UP ALL THE TRAFFIC! EVENIN' COME AN' ME WANNA GO HOOOOME!

S'LONG, SUCKERS! NEXT TIME TAKE THE TRAIN!

BIG-HEAD

POLICE

WHAT? ON THE FREE-WAY?

ANYONE KILLED? THANK GOD...

BIG-HEAD

ABE! CALL STAN, TELL HIM NO PRESS UNTIL I GET TO THE SCENE, GOT IT? JESUS, WHAT A MESS...

LOOK, COMMISSIONER HEARNS, YOU PROMISED ME FIVE MINUTES--

I DIDN'T AGREE TO FIVE MINUTES OF HAVING SOME OUT-OF-TOWN COP TELL ME HOW TO RUN MY DEPART-MENT--

SIR, WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, I'M TELLING YOU, THAT YOU DON'T REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST HERE--

HEAR THAT, BOYS? THE LIEUTENANT WANTS TO HELP!

I'VE GOT A PSYCHO TERRORIST WRECKING MY TOWN, A PANICKED PUBLIC, AND THE F.B.I. ON MY BACK! YOU, BIG SHOT, I DON'T NEED!

LOOK, ALL I'M ASKING IS TO SHARE INFORMATION HERE--

I DON'T NEED INFOR-MATION, I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU, KELLAWAY--

--YOU BOTCHED NAILING THIS "BIG-HEAD" SEVERAL TIMES OVER, SO NOW IT'S PERSONAL, RIGHT? YOU WATCH TOO MUCH T.V., MISTER -- IT DOESN'T WORK THAT WAY!

THIS ISN'T YOUR TOWN, KELLAWAY! IT'S NOT YOUR CASE! GO HOME, LIEUTENANT! GO HOME!

BIG-HEAD

...EVEN *WORSE* THAN THAT PIG-HEADED COMMISSIONER ARE THE DAMN REPORTERS -- THEY'RE ALL *OVER* ME!

ASKING ME IF I FEEL "*RESPONSIBLE*" IN ANY WAY... JERKS...

IF ONLY THESE MORONS *KNEW* HOW HARD IT IS TO NAIL ANYONE WHO HAS THAT DAMNED *MASK*!

WELL, I'LL DO WHAT I CAN FROM HERE. BESIDES KEEPING THE CAPTAIN FROM *SUSPENDING* YOUR BUTT...

I APPRECIATE IT, *LIONEL*. I'M GETTING *NOWHERE* WITH SKY CITY P.D. *NO ONE'S* TALKING...I'M GETTING A WEIRD VIBE FROM THIS TOWN.

NOT TO MENTION THIS NEW *BIG-HEAD*...

SOMETHING'S *UP* WITH THIS GUY, HE'S GOT AN AGENDA, A SPECIFIC BEEF WITH THIS TOWN. DOESN'T LIKE *RICH PEOPLE*--

WHO *DOES*?

I KNOW, I KNOW. BUT AFTER HE BLOWS UP INSURANCE BUILDINGS, HE HELPS MUGGING VICTIMS.

WE'VE GOT TO LOOK INTO THIS GUY'S PATTERN AND TRY TO I.D. HIM BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE --

"-- AND MORE PEOPLE GET HURT BECAUSE OF THAT LOUSY MASK."

SEE, EMILY, I MADE A SPECIAL DINNER FOR US TONIGHT.

EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT FROM NOW ON, SWEETIE, YOU'LL SEE.

I KNOW I GOT ANGRY LAST NIGHT, AND I BROKE A FEW THINGS, AND I'M *SORRY*...

...I'M SORRY...

I'M SO SORRY, RAY... MADELINE WAS VERY SPECIAL TO EVERYONE AT THE OFFICE.

THAT POOR CHILD ...LOSING HER MOTHER LIKE THIS...

MOST CHILDREN WHO SUFFER FROM TRAUMA-INDUCED MUTENESS *REGAIN* THEIR ABILITY TO SPEAK... USING "PLAY" THERAPY OFTEN HELPS...

BUT, I'M SORRY TO SAY, YOUR BEING UN-INSURED MEANS THE FINANCIAL BURDEN WOULD BE DIRECTLY ON YOU...

I'M *SORRY*, MR. TUTTLE, BUT YOUR LOAN APPLICATION HAS BEEN TURNED *DOWN*.

MY HANDS ARE TIED... I'M *SORRY*.

COME TO WITH YOU LOAN NEE

WE CAR SKY CIT SAVINGS & L

I'M *TERRIBLY* SORRY, BUT SOME OF EMILY'S CLASS-MATES SEEM TO BE HAVING TROUBLE, AH, *ADJUSTING* TO HER...

PERHAPS SHE MAY BE BETTER OFF IN OUR CLASSES FOR ..."*SPECIAL*" STUDENTS?

IT'S NOT THE *MONEY*, YOU UNDERSTAND, IT'S *HATHAWAY*. HE'S TOO CONNECTED, HE'S GOT FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES.

I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOUR CASE, BUT I *CAN'T*. *SORRY*...

SORRY SORRY

...SORRY... EMMY...

--I ASKED HATHAWAY ABOUT ANY SECURITY CON-CERNS FOR TONIGHT'S OPENING--

OTHER THAN RUNNING OUT OF CHAMPAGNE, I DON'T FORESEE ANY TROUBLE. AND WE HAVE A CAPABLE SECURITY STAFF, SO REALLY I'M NOT CONCERNED.

BESIDES, COMMISSIONER HEARNS IS A FRIEND--

ALL NEW!

--AND I HAVE GREAT FAITH IN HIS DEPARTMENT'S ABILITY TO RESTORE ORDER TO OUR CITY--

UH, HEY, EM! I FORGOT--ABOUT TOMORROW? DO YOU WANT ME TO MAKE YOU A COSTUME FOR YOUR PARTY?

YOU DO? EMILY, THAT'S TERRIFIC!

WHAT, SWEETIE? WHAT ARE YOU POINTING AT?

Y-YOU WANT TO GO AS BIG-HEAD? OH, EMMY, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS...

--I FIND IT OUTRAGEOUS THAT SOMEONE WOULD SELL AN ITEM LIKE THIS! WHAT IS THIS WORLD COMING TO?

MAYOR WILLIAM O'BRIAN

BIG-HEAD'S NOT VERY POPULAR AROUND HERE, HONEY. HE BLOWS UP THINGS...

HARPO BROS.

THE BIG MUSICAL SHOW!

VIRGINIA GREY

MARGARET DUMONT

DOUGLASS DUMBRILLE

WELL, WHO KNOWS... MAYBE AFTER TONIGHT A LOT MORE PEOPLE WILL BE BIG-HEAD FANS...

"...AFTER HE BREAKS THE BANK AT THE SKY CITY CASINO."

...THANK YOU, THANK YOU! AND I WANT TO THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING TONIGHT...

...AS WELL AS WELCOME YOU-- TO THE GRAND OPENING OF SKY CITY'S FIRST AND FINEST INTERNA-TIONAL HOTEL CASINO!

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

I HOPE YOU'RE ALL ENJOYING THE FESTIVI-TIES... THE FOOD, THE DRINKS... THE LEGAL GAMBLING!

HA HA HA HA HA

SPEAKING OF WHICH, I'M SORRY THE FIVE-MILLION SLOT ISN'T UP FOR GRABS, MY FRIENDS, BUT THAT'S FOR REELING IN THE LITTLE FISH--

"--YOU KNOW, THE ONES WE AREN'T LETTING IN TONIGHT!"

EXCUSE ME, SIR. I'LL NEED TO SEE YOUR INVITATION, PLEASE.

SO PLEASE, EAT, DRINK, AND GAMBLE TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT--

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, I HAD IT HERE JUST A MOMENT AGO--

CHECK YOUR BACK POCKET!

YOU BE QUIET! AHA!

ROSEBUD

ADMIT ONE LUNATIC OR EVIL

FOUND IT!

A TOAST TO YOU, MY ESTEEMED GUESTS! ENJOY YOURSELVES, AND REMEMBER--

--TONIGHT, THE SKY'S THE LIMIT!

KRA CHUNK!

SPESH!

WELCOME TO SHERWOOD HATH OLD BEAN!!

LIKE MY DRAMATIC ENTRANCE?

DOWN, FLUFFY, DOWN! SIT! OKAY, DO WHATEVER YOU WANT, BAD DOG...

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS? HOW DID HE GET IN HERE?!

THUMP!

HOW ELSE? I USED-- VIOLENCE!!

WAK!

KLACH!

BRRIINNG

SECURITY!

THIS IS AN OUTRAGE!

NO, YOUR DIS-HONOR, THIS SICKENING DISPLAY OF GREED, EXTRAVAGANCE, AND WASTE PUT ON BY SKY CITY'S SO-CALLED "ELITE" IS AN OUTRAGE!

NOT TO MENTION THIS DECOR... YEECCH!

BUT SERIOUSLY, FOLKS, THIS WEALTH, THIS OPULENCE, FRANKLY IT MAKES ME GREEN WITH ENVY!

GREEN, GET IT? THASSA JOKE!

SLAPP

WHERE WAS I? OH, YES--ROBBING THE RICH, ETC., ETC.!

I SAY DOWN WITH THE BLOATED RICH! THE OVER-PRIVI-LEGED! THE FATCATS--

--THE HEAVILY ARMED?

NELSON! LET MY PEOPLE HANDLE THIS!

I DON'T SEE YOUR PEOPLE HERE, GEORGE! ALL I SEE IS PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE TRASHING MY CASINO!

WAIT! WAIT!

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? SHOOT HIM!

$10,000

AHH... AHH..

KAHOOIE!

BRRRRRT

KILL HIIIIIM!!

BLAM CHUNTA CHUNT POP POP

♪ MISSED ME, MISSED ME. NOW YA GOTTA KISS ME... ♪

HOW IN HELL--

HE'S GOT A BULLET-PROOF VEST!

BULLETPROOF VEST? I GOT A BULLETPROOF BRAIN, YOU IDIOT!

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

IT'S KIND OF CRAZY, TOO! TO WIT--

--ONE ORDER OF ULTRA-VIOLENCE COMIN' UP!

--ATTENTION ALL UNITS -- BIG-HEAD SUSPECT REPORTED AT SKY CITY CASINO--

WELL, THIS IS *IT. SHOWTIME.* I KNEW THIS SHIN-DIG WOULD BE TOO MUCH FOR OUR BOY TO PASS UP.

AND BY THE LOOKS OF THAT *MOB* BLOCKING THE ENTRANCE--

AAAHHH!

AAGH!

POLICE

SKY CITY

"--HE MUST BE GOING TO TOWN IN THERE!"

LOOK AT ME! I'M RUNNING AMUCK!

WAP!

THWAK!

THRUST! PARRY! GROIN KICK! NIPPLE TWIST! BELCH! TEAR OFF EAR! SLAP WITH HOT-WHEEL TRACK!

BIG BENNIES! BOXCARS! CLUBHOUSE!

RUMBLE!

YOU, SIR--YOU LOOK LIKE A GAMBLING MAN!

AM I GONNA SLAP YOU WITH A SACK OF POTATOES, OR A BAG OF BASE-BALLS?

BOTH!

BAG OF SPUDS!

BAG OF BALLS!

UHH-UH--

I TIRE OF THESE SILLY GAMES OF CHANCE! LET'S PLAY SOMETHING FUN! LIKE-- OPERATION! THE WACKY DOCTOR GAME!

SHUNK!

TAKE OUT WRENCHED ANKLE!

WOTTA CUT-UP!

WHAT A NIGHT! THIS IS MORE FUN THAN A BARREL OF MONKEYS! WAIT! I KNOW SOMETHING EVEN MORE FUN--

--A BARREL OF DRUNKEN MONKEYS WITH POWER TOOLS!

GO! FIGHT LIKE DRUNKS! THROW YOUR CRAP! WREAK HAVOC!

DON'T HEAR ANY MORE GUNFIRE -- THAT COULD BE GOOD *OR* BAD --

WHERE THE *HELL* ARE THE POLICE?

EXIT

" NOT THAT THEY'D BE ABLE TO *DO* MUCH--"

--JACKPOT! I WIN YOUR TEETH!

AH, WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?

AVAST YE, HATHAWAY! I'VE SPOTTED YA, YA SCURVY SWABBY! YOUR LUCK'S RUN OUT, ME HEARTY!

WAK!

SKY

YOUR PAST IS CATCHING UP TO YOU, NELSON! AND YOUR PAST IS PISSED!

NO! NOO-- AARGH!

BDAM! BDAM!

P-PLEASE! ANYTHING-- *ANYTHING YOU WANT!*

TOO LATE, HATHAWAY! YOU'RE GONNA PAY FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE!

B-BUT WHY? WHAT DID I EVER DO TO *YOU*?!

PAY NO ATTENTION

MEN

THIS WAY, PAL!

WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU *TAKING* ME--

WELL, LET'S JUST SAY YOU'RE TRAVELING TO ANOTHER DIMENSION, EH?

YOU UNLOCK THIS DOOR WITH THE KEY OF IMAGINATION!

YOU'RE IN A DIMENSION OF SIGHT!

AAHK

A DIMENSION OF SOUND!

A DIMENSION OF CRAWFISH! MAGGOTS! COOKBOOKS! RIGHT CROSSES! JABS! UPPERCUTS!

THAT'S THE SIGNPOST UP-SIDE YOUR HEAD, HATHAWAY!

YOU'VE JUST ENTERED--

THE TOILET ZONE!

FLOOSH!

HOW'S IT FEEL, MISTER "SEASHORE AMUSEMENTS" BIG SHOT?! HOW'S IT FEEL TO HAVE YOUR LIFE FLUSHED DOWN THE TOILET LIKE YOU FLUSHED MINE?!

LET HIM GO!

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!

AW, RELAX! I WAS JUST FUNNIN' WITH THE GUY! IT'S NOT LIKE I WAS GONNA KILL THE S.O.B.!

WAIT! STOP!

GO AHEAD, KOJAK. YOU JUST TRY AN' TAKE ME IN.

SHOOT ME! IT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD!

$10,000

I KNOW THAT...

I KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT MASK.

LISTEN TO ME! I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH!

THIS PATH YOU'RE ON-- IT'S A *DEAD END!* YOU CAN'T CONTROL THE MASK, IT'S TOO *STRONG!* IT'LL *DESTROY* YOUR LIFE!

RRMBRM

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING!

IT'S SAVING OUR LIVES!

SAVING LIVES? WITH A *CHAIN SAW?* YOU THINK THAT'S *FUNNY?*

THAT *MASK* DOES-- *I KNOW! I'VE WORN IT!*

I THOUGHT I COULD USE IT, TOO -- BUT ALL IT GOT ME WAS A TON OF TROUBLE AND THREE *SLUGS* IN MY BACK!

NO MATTER *WHAT* TROUBLES YOU'RE GOING THROUGH, NO MATTER *WHAT* YOU'RE TRYING TO DO -- *THAT MASK ISN'T THE ANSWER!*

LOOK AROUND YOU! LOOK AT THIS PLACE -- *SEE WHAT IT DOES?* IT'S JUST NO DAMNED *GOOD!* BUT WE CAN MAKE IT DISAPPEAR!

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TAKE IT *OFF--*

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!

LOUSY SCREW! TRY TO SUCKER ME!

NO, *WAIT!* =UGHH=

SORRY, BOYS, HATE TO BEAT 'N' RUN, BUT I HAVE THINGS TO DO TO-NIGHT!

GIVE MY LOVE TO NELSON! LOVELY PLACE HE HAD HERE!

KELLAWAY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

WHAT THE HELL DID YOU SAY TO HIM?

--SEE WHAT IT DOES?

EMILY!?

WHEW, OH, MAN...

HUH? WHAT'S THIS--?

--AND IT IS CONFIRMED--

SON!

TULLER SULLIVAN

GREAT. I REALLY BLEW IT BIG TIME...

HEY-- WHAT'S WITH THIS PAINT ON MY HANDS?

Dear Father, I couldn't wake you, so I took some art supplies to make myself a costume you shouldn't have promised

Emily

HOLY MOSES! MORE MASKS!

I MUST HAVE MADE THESE LAST NIGHT! BUT--

--THE "BIG-HEAD" KILLER HAS KILLED AGAIN--

KILLED...?

DEVELOPER NELSON HATHAWAY DIED OF A HEART ATTACK AFTER SUFFERING A VICIOUS BEATING DURING LAST NIGHT'S FIVE-MILLION-DOLLAR CASINO HEIST--

AFTERWARD, HUNDREDS WERE INJURED WHEN RIOTS BROKE OUT AFTER THE MONEY WAS DISPERSED INTO THE STREETS OF SKY CITY--

OH, GOD... EVERYTHING'S GONE WRONG --I KILLED SOMEBODY! I THINK I'M GOING TO BE SICK--

THAT COP WAS RIGHT-- THAT MASK IS NO GOOD! I'VE GOT TO GET RID OF IT--

WELCOME TO SKY CITY

"--THIS HAS TO END NOW!"

ARE YOU VISITING SKY CITY FOR PURPOSES OF BUSINESS OR PLEASURE?

FINES

OH, PLEASURE, OF COURSE...

...STRICTLY FOR PLEASURE...

SKY CITY...OCTOBER 31ST...

HALLOWEEN.

...I'LL TELL YOU, THE WHOLE THING HAS *ME* SCARED. *NO ONE'S* SAFE FROM THIS GUY, *AM I RIGHT?*

I MEAN, I GOT OUT OF *NEW YORK* TO GET AWAY FROM ALL THIS *CRAP*, Y'KNOW? AT LEAST *THERE* YOU KNEW WHAT THE *DEAL* WAS!

MUGGINGS, DRIVE-BYS, THE *OCCASIONAL* CRAZED GUNMAN... AND, *OKAY, SOMETIMES* A *BOMB*. BUT THIS, *FORGET ABOUT IT!*

I MEAN, LOOK AROUND-- SKY CITY'S A *GHOST TOWN!* IN *TWO DAYS*, HE'S *SHUT DOWN* THE STOCK MARKET, *BLOWN UP* HALF THE CITY ...NOBODY HAS A CLUE *WHO* HE IS, *WHERE* HE IS, OR *WHAT THE HELL* HE'S AFTER!

THIS IS A NEW KIND OF PSYCHO, MY FRIEND, LET ME TELL YOU.

AND YOU'LL SEE, THAT GUY *HATHAWAY*, HE AIN'T THE *LAST*, UH-UH. *NO WAY*. THERE'S GONNA BE A *BLOOD BATH* BEFORE THIS IS ALL OVER, F.B.I. OR NO--

UH, LOOK, YOU GONNA *BUY* THAT PAPER, MISTER?

WHAT? *OH!* OH, YEAH, *SORRY*--

THEY SAY WE GOT SOME STORM COMING IN LATER. GREAT, HUH? LIKE WE AIN'T HAD *ENOUGH* TO DEAL WITH LATELY, RIGHT?

ANYWAY, YOU TAKE CARE, BUDDY, *STAY DRY!*

NAUGHTY
SAUCY
GIRL
HOLY
SO. WHERE ARE MY WEAPONS?
DEPENDS. WHERE'S MY MONEY?
TOW
GOOD. GOOD.
YOU UNDERSTAND THE REASON FOR THE HIGH PRICE... BUSINESS IS BUSINESS, YOU UNDERSTAND. IT WASN'T EASY GETTING THIS STUFF ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE.
MUST BE SOME HITLER YOUTH RALLY YOU FOLKS GOT PLANNED--
THAT'S VERY FUNNY. NOW WHERE ARE THE WEAPONS?
IN A STORAGE SPACE, OUT BY THE CITY LIMITS. THE ADDRESS AND STORAGE NUMBER ARE ON THE KEY TAG. IT'S NOT FAR. WANT ME TO RIDE OUT WITH YOU?
I THINK IT WOULD BE BEST IF YOU REMAINED HERE.
KURT?
WAIT! WAIT! SON OF A B--
NEWT
VOGUE
NAUGHTY
HE *WAS* RIGHT YOU KNOW... BUSINESS *IS* BUSINESS.

WAS THAT NECESSARY?

WHAT DOES IT MATTER? IF WE SUCCEED HERE, WE WON'T NEED ANYTHING FROM ANYONE EVER AGAIN.

AND IF WE *DON'T*?

AH, BUT WE *WILL*. KURT, *NUR ZU!* LEAVE HIM!

HOLD ON! I'M GETTING SOMETHING--

WE DON'T HAVE *TIME*, KURT! COME ON! *NOW!*

SO, NOW WHAT? HOW DO WE FIND THE MASK?

UM GOTTES WILLEN! KURT, WIPE YOUR FACE, AH? YOU LOOK AS IF YOU CUT YOUR OWN THROAT!

AS FOR THE *MASK*...

RECOGNIZE THIS MAN? HIS NAME IS *LIEUTENANT KELLAWAY.*

HE SEEMS TO HAVE A PENCHANT FOR BEING WHERE THE MASK APPEARS. I THINK HIS BEING IN SKY CITY IS NO MORE A COINCIDENCE THAN *OUR* BEING HERE.

VANESSA, TAKE KURT AND MARTIN AND FIND THIS POLICEMAN. WE'LL RENDEZVOUS WITH YOU AFTER PICKING UP THE EQUIPMENT.

BE CAREFUL. THE OTHERS WILL SURELY BE COMING--IF THEY ARE NOT HERE ALREADY.

"GOTT WILLING, WE'LL HAVE THE MASK BEFORE WE MEET THEM AGAIN... I TRULY BELIEVE KELLAWAY MAY BE THE KEY--"

"--IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT WE LEARN WHAT HE KNOWS..."

--YEAH, I *KNOW* I SOUND LIKE I HAVEN'T SLEPT ALL NIGHT. IT'S BECAUSE I *HAVEN'T.* NOW COME ON, LIONEL, DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING FOR ME OR *NOT?*

WHAT? WELL THEN, *TELL ME!*

OKAY, YOU SAID BIG-HEAD MENTIONED *"SEASHORE AMUSEMENTS"* WHEN HE ATTACKED NELSON HATHAWAY, *RIGHT?*

WELL, IT WAS MORE LIKE *SCREAMING,* BUT YEAH--

WELL, IT TURNS OUT SEASHORE WAS AN AMUSEMENT PARK THIS CREEP HATHAWAY OWNED UP UNTIL FIVE YEARS AGO, WHEN HE DECLARED BANKRUPTCY AFTER AN ACCIDENT THAT INJURED A MAN AND HIS DAUGHTER AND KILLED HIS WIFE...

I BET THAT'S OUR BOY-- YOU GOT A NAME AND ADDRESS?

NO PHONE? OKAY. LIONEL, YOU'RE A *SAINT.* NOW, IF YOU COULD JUST KEEP THE CAPTAIN FROM SUSPENDING ME AGAIN--

HUH, FORGET *HIM.* WAIT UNTIL *KATHY* GETS A HOLD OF YOU. I'LL TELL YOU, MAN, SHE'S REALLY UPSET YOU WENT CHASING AFTER BI--

KLIK-BZZZZ

KELLAWAY? *HELLO?*

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO CLEAR OUT OF HERE! YOU ARE *THIS* CLOSE TO BEING THROWN INTO LOCKUP, KELLAWAY, *YOU HEAR ME? THIS CLOSE!*

NOW, GET OFF MY PHONES, AND GET OUT OF MY PRECINCT!

WHAT'S THE MATTER, *HEARNS*, NEED SOMEBODY TO TAKE IT OUT ON BECAUSE THE *FEDS* KICKED YOU OUT OF THE *DRIVER'S SEAT*?

THAT'S IT, KELLAWAY! NOW YOU LISTEN TO ME, WISE GUY--I BETTER NOT FIND YOU IN MY CITY AFTER TONIGHT, YOU HEAR ME? OR I SWEAR I'LL SEE TO IT YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO POUND A BEAT IN A SCHOOL LUNCHROOM, SO HELP ME--

YEAH, YEAH, DON'T WORRY... I WAS THINKING OF GETTING OUT OF THIS GOD-FORSAKEN *HOLE* ANYWAY. HALF OF IT'S RUBBLE, AND THE COFFEE REALLY *SUCKS*.

GOOD LUCK, BOYS AND GIRLS. *YOU'LL NEED IT.*

BURNS, GORDON, I WANT HIM FOLLOWED.

"KELLAWAY'S UP TO SOMETHING--AND I WANT TO KNOW *WHAT!*"

AXEL! WE'VE FOUND HIM! IT APPEARS HE'S BEING FOLLOWED.

NO, NONE OF THEM... FROM THE LOOKS OF IT, IT'S LOCAL POLICE... YES...YES, I'LL HANDLE IT.

POLICE

DAMN. WELL, I *FIGURED* HEARNS WOULD PUT A TAIL ON ME... LOOKS LIKE I FIGURED RIGHT. HUH. MY *MOTHER* COULD'VE MADE THOSE TWO.

NOW I'LL HAVE TO WASTE TIME LOSING THEM...

...TIME I MAY NOT *HAVE*. I'VE GOT TO GET TO THIS GUY *QUICK*--

Ray Tuttle
91 Beaumont Street

"--BEFORE HE DECIDES TO DO ANY *MORE* TRICK-OR-TREATING WITH THAT DAMNED *HALLOWEEN MASK FROM HELL...*"

--AT THE TOP OF THE HOUR, I'M CINDY WALSH WITH THE LATEST ON THE BIG-HEAD CASE--

A SPECIAL F.B.I. *TASK FORCE* IS SET TO CONVERGE ON SKY CITY THIS AFTERNOON IN AN ATTEMPT TO *APPREHEND* THE SO-CALLED "BIG-HEAD" KILLER--

ALL NEW! TARZAN finds a SON! starring WEISSMULLER and O'SULLIVAN

--WHOSE ATTACKS IN THE *PAST TWO DAYS* HAVE INJURED *HUNDREDS* OF PEOPLE, CAUSED *MILLIONS* OF DOLLARS OF DAMAGE, AND CLAIMED THE LIFE OF DEVELOPER NELSON HATHAWAY.

THE MOOD IN SKY CITY IS ONE OF *FEAR* AND *UNCERTAINTY* IN THE WAKE OF THE DEADLY ATTACKS--

IT'S JUST TERRIBLE... SO FRIGHTENING--

THAT MANIAC, THAT "BIG-HEAD," HE'S RUNNING LOOSE OUT THERE, AND *NOBODY* SEEMS TO BE DOING ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

MY KIDS WANT TO GO OUT TRICK-OR-TREATING TODAY, BUT I'LL TELL YOU, I'M NOT LETTING MY CHILDREN OUT ON THE STREETS--

Dear Father, I couldn't wake you so I took some art supplies to make myself a costume. You promised...

" --I DON'T EVEN WANT THEM GOING TO *SCHOOL* UNTIL THAT MANIAC IS STOPPED--"

WHERE THE *HELL* IS KELLAWAY GOING? I'M GETTING TIRED OF THIS--

RELAX, KID. JUST KEEP YOUR DISTANCE AND BE *PATIENT*. GIVE HIM TIME, HE'S UP TO SOMETH--

HELP! SOMEONE PLEASE *HELP*--

WHAT THE *HELL*?

PLEASE-- WE'VE BEEN ROBBED! MY HUSBAND-- *THEY HURT HIM-- HE NEEDS A DOCTOR!*

OKAY, MA'AM-- NOW *HOLD ON, YOU JUST RE-MAIN CALM!*

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS--*GORDON*, WHAT ABOUT *KELLAWAY*?

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO *DO*, *LEAVE* THESE PEOPLE HERE? YOU GO ON, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS --

NOW, KURT!

SHI--!

SKUGH

WELL, I HAVEN'T SEEN STARSKY AND HUTCH IN A WHILE. I'LL KEEP AN EYE OUT DURING THE RIDE JUST IN CASE--

"--BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I FINALLY GOT RID OF THOSE TWO JERKS.

"NOW I ONLY HOPE THE *REST* OF THIS GOES AS SMOOTHLY..."

...WELL, OF COURSE WE THOUGHT ABOUT CANCELING, BUT THE CHILDREN WOULD'VE BEEN *SO* DISRPPOINTED--

OH, I *KNOW.* MY RONNIE'S BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS FOR *WEEKS!*

HOPEFULLY THIS WHOLE ORDEAL WILL BE OVER SOON.

LET'S HOPE SO. AND LET'S HOPE THAT *MONSTER* GETS WHAT HE *DE-SERVES* WHEN HE'S BROUGHT TO JUSTICE--

HEY, EVERYBODY! GET A LOAD OF WHAT EMILY THE DUMMY'S WEARING!

EXIT

OH, MY GOD...

...I CAN'T *BELIEVE* HER PARENTS ALLOWED HER TO DRESS LIKE THAT MURDERER--

EMILY TUTTLE! THAT COSTUME IS *ENTIRELY* INAPPROPRIATE! DIDN'T YOU LIS-TEN TO WHAT I TOLD YOU YESTERDAY?

NOW, YOU GO WIPE THAT MAKE-UP OFF YOUR FACE *RIGHT THIS INSTANT,* YOUNG LADY! *YOU HEAR?* WE'LL SPEAK ABOUT THIS AFTER YOU'RE DONE--

HA-HA! NICE GOIN', EMILY! NICE COSTUME, DUMMY!

HAPPY HALL

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

HA HA HA HA HA HA

...I'VE ALWAYS BEEN AGAINST HER ATTENDING REGULAR CLASSES--

EXIT

HAS SHE DONE ANY-THING LIKE THIS BEFORE?

NOTHING THIS OMINOUS, BUT SHE HAS BEEN A CON-STANT DISRUPTIVE ELEMENT IN THE--

--CLASSROOM...

TRICK OR TREAT!

SMELL MY FEET!

GIVE ME ALL YOUR HEADS TO BEAT!!

WHEEE-DOGGIE! LOOK, EVERYBODY! I'M BEWITCHED! BOTHERED! BEWILDERING!

I'M BIG-HEAD! FLY ME!

NOW, DON'T WORRY, FOLKS--

I'M NOT HERE TO **CRASH** YOUR PARTY--

--I'M HERE TO **TRASH** YOUR PARTY!

NA NA NA NA!

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING-- HOW DOES SHE DO IT? WHY DOES SHE DO IT?

WHEN WILL SHE STOP DOING IT?

PLEASE, PLEASE, YOU MUST STOP THIS! THINK OF THE CHILDREN!

SILLY OLD HAG--I AM THINKING OF THE CHILDREN!

AND THINKING ABOUT THEM MAKES ME SICK!

AAAGHH!

WHOOPS! GUESS I HAD TOO MUCH PUNCH!

AND SPEAKING OF PUNCH--

INTO THE PUKE, STINK-BOYS!

WHAP

WHAP

WHAP

HEY! I KNOW A TERRIFIC PARTY GAME WE ALL CAN PLAY! READY?

IT'S CALLED--

--RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!

AHAHAHA! HAVE A LITTLE FIRE, SCAREDY-CATS!

4000 OZ. BIG HEAD HOOCH

FOOOF!

CANDY IS DANDY--BUT LIQUOR BURNS QUICKER!

HMM. I GUESS THOSE STUPID SCHOOL FIRE DRILLS WORK AFTER ALL...

PARTY-POOPERS...

KRUMP

♪ NO MORE PENCILS, NO MORE BOOKS, NO MORE PUTTING UP WITH SCHNOOKS! ♫

SPASH

HEY! WAITAMINIT! TIME-OUT! I JUST REALIZED SOMETHING!

IF THE MASK TURNED ME INTO BIG-HEAD -- AND THIS WAS DADDY'S MASK --

THEN DADDY IS BIG-HEAD! WAHOOO!

MREOWR!

WAIT 'TIL I TELL DAD WHAT A GREAT TIME I HAD AT THE PARTY! HE'LL BE SO HAPPY --

WELL, CAN'T STICK AROUND ALL DAY --

BEEP BEEP

DAD'S SOOO COOL! AND NOW I'M COOL TOO!

I'M A BUSY LITTLE CAMPER!

I'VE GOT TRICK-OR-TREATING TO DO!

STOP

KRUMP!

FEMP!

THE TEENAGER WAS WEARING ONE OF THE NOTORIOUS RUBBER "BIG-HEAD" MASKS WHEN OFFICER MILLER FIRED... HE IS NOW LISTED IN STABLE CONDITION--

--AND WE HAVE THIS JUST IN--

SHUT UP! SHUT UP SHUT UP SHUT UP! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANY MORE!

IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN THIS WAY!

WHAT DO I DO NOW? TURN MYSELF IN? I *CAN'T*--WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO *EMILY? NO*...WE'LL HAVE TO LEAVE TOWN--BUT *HOW?* AND WITH WHAT MONEY?

MAYBE... MAYBE IF I PUT IT ON JUST ...ONE...MORE... TIME...

THE DOOR-BELL...? *EMILY!*

BZRING!

EMILY?!

OH...UH... I'M SORRY ...W-WE'RE CLOSED--

MISTER *TUTTLE?*

I CAN TELL BY YOUR EX-PRESSION THAT YOU RECOGNIZE ME FROM THE CASINO LAST NIGHT, MISTER TUTTLE. MY NAME IS LIEUTENANT KELLAWAY...

"...I THINK WE SHOULD *TALK*..."

H-HOW DO I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT THE MASK BACK... YOU KNOW... FOR *YOURSELF?*

BECAUSE, RAY, IF I WANTED IT, YOU'D BE *DEAD* RIGHT NOW... INSTEAD OF SITTING *HERE* TALKING TO ME. END OF STORY.

I DON'T *WANT* IT, RAY. I TOLD YOU THE TRUTH LAST NIGHT. I'VE WORN IT, AND I'VE DEALT WITH PEOPLE WHO'VE WORN IT... IT'S JUST NO DAMNED GOOD FOR *ANYONE.*

THEN WHY DON'T WE JUST *BREAK IT?* OR *BURN* IT OR--

IT'S BEEN TRIED. DOESN'T WORK. ALL WE CAN DO IS TRY TO GET *RID* OF IT.

SPEAKING OF THE MASK... WHERE IS IT, RAY?

IT'S... IT'S UPSTAIRS... WITH THE *OTHERS...*

OTHERS? EXCUSE ME?

I MADE COPIES OF IT IN MY SLEEP LAST NIGHT. DON'T KNOW WHY... BUT THEN AGAIN, NOTHING ABOUT THAT MASK MAKES ANY SENSE...

HM. DO YOU KNOW WHICH IS THE REAL ONE?

NO. AND I'M AFRAID TO FIND OUT... THE TEMPTATION IS SO STRONG... I DON'T WANT TO PUT IT ON AGAIN, YOU KNOW?

YEAH... I KNOW.

DING DONG

COMING!

REALLY, ANN, THE WAY YOU CATER TO THESE LITTLE BEG-GARS--

OH, RICHARD-- STOP--IT'S ALL HARMLESS FUN--

BWAAHAHAA! TRICK OR TREAT!

YOU CAN KEEP YOUR STUPID CANDY CORN, POPS! WHERE'S THE VCR? BETTER YET, GOT A LASER-DISC PLAYER?

ANN? ANN?

AAAAAH!!

BOY, DO RICH PEOPLE HAVE SWELL STUFF! THEY SURE ARE GRUMPY WHEN YOU TAKE IT, THOUGH!

I HOPE DAD LIKES WHAT I GOT HIM. I--

OW! STOP IT! OW!

STOP IT!

HEY! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA HERE?

MANIAC VIDEO

HAHAHA HA

CHAK

SPLAT

HEY, THIS, UGLY!

WHO ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO BE, BIG-HEAD THE WITCH?

HAHAHA

WOW, THAT WAS THE MAJOR BONEHEAD MISTAKE OF YOUR LIVES, MY LITTLE LOW-I.Q. FRIENDS...

OH, YEAH-- YOU THINK SO?

HAHAHA

HM. MUST'VE BEEN HARD BOILED.

SAAAY--

I KNOW SO.

WAK!!

CHAK!

CRUNCH!

--AHOY, YON VIDEO STORE!

THIS IS PERFECT! I'LL GET DADDY A MOVIE--AND THEN I'LL BE DONE WITH MY TRICK-OR-TREATMENTS!

VIDEO MANIA

VIDEO MAN

SUBWA

VIDEO MANIAC

EXCUSE ME!

MY, WHAT AN *UNUSUAL* COSTUME... WOULD YOU LIKE SOME HALLOWEEN CANDY, YOUNG LADY?

FORGET THE CANDY CRAP-- YOU GOT ANY JACKIE CHAN OR JET LI FLICKS?

UH-- *WHO?*

Y'KNOW, JACKIE CHAN! MARTIAL ARTS? TIGER CLAW-- DRUNKEN BOX-ING--SPINNING SIDE KICK--

OH, RIGHT. WELL I DON'T THINK WE HAVE THAT, BUT WE DO HAVE *CHUCK NORRIS* AND *STEVEN SEAGA*--

HA! WHOOSH! HA!

WHAT?!? SCREW THAT WEAK CRAP!!

OH, POO... NO FILM TONIGHT...

AND NOW IT'S STARTING TO RAIN! WHAT A BOTHER-- IT'LL PUT THE FIRE OUT!

OH, WELL, CHEER UP, EMILY! LIKE DAD SAYS-- LET A SMILE BE YOUR UMBRELLA!

I'M SINGIN' IN THE RAIN-- JUST SINGIN' IN THE RAAAIN--

PHLOOMF

ALL I WANTED WAS TO MAKE A BETTER LIFE FOR EMILY AND ME... AND HELP PEOPLE LIKE US... PEOPLE WITH *NOTHING*... BUT IT ALL GOT OUT OF HAND...

I *NEVER* MEANT TO HURT ANYONE... TO CAUSE SO MUCH PAIN. I ENDED UP DOING *EXACTLY* WHAT HATHAWAY DID...

...I KILLED SOMEONE... *I RUINED LIVES*...

DON'T BE TOO HARD ON YOURSELF, RAY... BELIEVE ME, I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH. YOU DIDN'T USE THE MASK TO KILL SOMEONE, THE MASK USED *YOU*. THE MASK *CONTROLS* PEOPLE, RAY... NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

I MEAN, *HELL*, IF *MOTHER TERESA* WAS WEARING THE MASK SHE'D BE GOING AROUND KICKING ORPHANS!

BESIDES... FROM WHAT I UNDERSTAND, THE WORLD'S A BETTER PLACE WITHOUT A SNAKE LIKE NELSON HATHAWAY IN IT...

BUT STILL... I DIDN'T MEAN FOR HIM TO DIE...

...I MEAN ...I ONLY FLUSHED *ONCE*--

CHANEY LAUG CLO LAUG

HERBERT BRENON PRODUCTION

HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!

CHANEY LAUG CLO LAUG

WHAT THE HELL--?

RAY!

GET OUT OF HERE!

SCHRACK

GET-- AAAGH!

OH, GOD OH, GOD OH, GOD--

KRESH! THUMP!

OH, GOD --FORGIVE ME--

YOU HAVE IT ALL *WRONG*, MY FRIEND--

--*I'M* THE ONE YOU SHOULD BE ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS.

NOW, BE A *GOOD* LITTLE BOY... *AND GET YOUR FILTHY HANDS OFF MY MASK...*

FALSCH!

SKY CITY

ERSATZ! FAKE!

THE LOT OF THEM!

THA-KRASH!

DAMN YOU, WHERE IS IT?! WHERE IS THE REAL MASK?!

SHOW ME WHERE YOU ARE HIDING IT!

P-PLEASE...I *SWEAR* TO YOU... IT WAS THERE...I DON'T KNOW WH-WHERE IT--

YES, YES... AND OF COURSE THE *LIEUTENANT* KNOWS NOTHING *EITHER, CORRECT?* THE BEATING KURT GAVE HIM, IT LOOSENED HIS MEMORY, *HM?*

Lon Chane
HE WHO GETS SLAPPED

YOU DRAW FAIRLY WELL, HERR TUTTLE. FOR A *CRIPPLE.*

YOU LIKE THESE CREATURES, EH? *VAMPIRES, WEREWOLVES... FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER...*

THEY ARE *HOLLYWOOD... FAKE.* FORGET THEM, MY FRIEND... THERE ARE *REAL* MONSTERS IN THIS WORLD.

LOOK AT ME, TUTTLE. *I...* AM A REAL MONSTER.

NOW TELL ME WHERE THE MASK IS... OR THESE LAST FEW MOMENTS YOU HAVE ON EARTH WILL BE TERRIBLE ONES INDEED...

PLEASE-- I SWEAR I DON'T--

LÜGNER! DAMN YOU!

YOU GODDAMN, LOUSY-- AAGK!

KURT, ERNST-- TAKE THEM DOWNSTAIRS. YOU AND MARTIN TEAR THAT RAG SHOP TO PIECES. THE REST OF US WILL SEARCH HERE--

SEI RUHIG!

WAIT! PLEASE--

YOU SAD, STUPID, LITTLE MAN. ALL THAT *POWER*... AND YOU *WASTE IT* ON A WORTHLESS EXISTENCE IN THIS DECREPIT *HOVEL. PATHETISCH!*

IT WILL BE DIFFERENT WHEN THE MASK IS UPON *MY* FACE...WHERE IT WILL SERVE THE HIGHEST PURPOSE *IMAGINABLE--FULFILLING THE SACRED DREAM OF MEIN HERRENVOLK...!*

...AND I *WILL* WEAR THE MASK, HERR TUTTLE...

"...*WITH* OR *WITHOUT* YOUR COOPERATION!"

NICHTS! THIS IS RIDICULOUS! IT'S ALL JUNK!

WE SHOULD JUST BURN THIS STY AND SIFT THE STINKING ASHES!

CRAKK!

RAY! RAY?!

LISTEN. THE MASK... IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE. WE HAVE TO FIGURE OUT A WAY FOR ONE OF US TO GET TO IT--

BUT--I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS ...I DON'T! MAYBE I DID SOMETHING WITH IT WHEN I MADE THE COPIES... I JUST CAN'T THINK...

KURT!

WE FOUND NOTHING...ONLY *GARBAGE.*

HM. SAME UPSTAIRS. WE DID FIND *ONE* THING OF INTEREST, HOWEVER--

--OUR UNCOOPERATIVE FRIEND HERE...HAS A *DAUGHTER.* TELL ME, HERR TUTTLE...YOUR *EMILY*--

--YOU ARE EXPECTING HER HOME SOON, *YES?*

NO! YOU CAN'T--SHE'S *AAAGH!*

IF YOU CARE FOR HER THEN TELL ME WHERE IT IS! TELL ME!

OTHERWISE, I SWEAR TO YOU I WILL CUT YOUR PRECIOUS LITTLE GIRL UP INTO WET STRIPS FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD STRAYS TO EAT IN THE GUTTER!

DO NOT UNDER--

AXEL! OUTSIDE! COME QUICKLY!

WHAT--

IT'S WONG KAI-YING! THEY APPEARED FROM NOWHERE!

GOTT IM HIMMEL--

"--THE IRON TRIAD IS HERE!"

STOLTENBERG! WE COME FOR THE MASK!

SO... I SEE WE WERE NOT THE ONLY ONES TO SURVIVE KYOTO. *PITY.* I HAD HOPED SHIBATA'S PEOPLE WOULD DESTROY YOU.

SHIBATA AND HIS PEOPLE SLEEP FITFULLY. THEY HUNT THE MASK NO LONGER.

NO MATTER... THE HUNT IS ALL BUT *ENDED.* THE MASK IS WELL WITHIN OUR GRASP.

SOON WE WILL RESHAPE THIS INFESTED PLANET, AND VERMIN LIKE YOU AND THE OTHERS WILL TROUBLE US NO MORE!

HA-HA-HA! WHAT FOOLISHNESS! YOU MUST DEAL WITH US AND THE OTHERS *NOW,* STOLTENBERG --NOT *"SOON"!*

OTHERS-- *WHAT OTHERS?*

ARE YOU *BLIND?* LOOK ABOUT YOU --

1923 AD

EVERYONE-- IN CLOSE! PICK YOUR TARGETS!

...GOD...AM I SORRY I EVER FOUND THAT MASK...

ME TOO, BROTHER... ME TOO...

ACH! NOW WHAT--?!

KELLAWAY -- MAYBE IT'S THE *COPS!*

I DON'T THINK SO, RAY -- FROM WHAT I CAN MAKE OUT--

AXEL! THE LIGHTNING! SEHEN SIE HER--

--MATSUDA'S EARTH NINJAS!

"--I'D SAY IT'S THE EXACT *OPPOSITE*..."

IT WAS A MISTAKE FOR YOU TO COME HERE, ANTONUCCI--

IS THAT SO? YOU THINK AFTER PERU WE JUST GIVE UP ON THE MASK, EH? THAT'S FUNNY!

ALMOST AS FUNNY AS ANY OF YOU THINKIN' YOU GOT A CHANCE OF GETTIN' OUTTA HERE ALIVE, YOU ARYAN BA--

K-CHIK

CLIK

KL-CHAK

CHAK

K-CHAK

K-CHAK

CHAK

CLAK

K-CHIK

DAVE!!

LOOK!

"...EMILY--"

MEIN GOTT...

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO MY DADDY?!?

RHH!

WHAT THE HELL?

OH, BOY...

NO...
OH, NO...

ZX1-VKR

YOU LEAVE HIM ALONE, YOU BIG BULLIES! OR I SWEAR YOU'LL BE REALLY, REALLY SORRY!

RELAX, DAD! I CAN HANDLE THESE HISTORY CHANNEL REJECTS!

E-EMILY?

INCREDIBLE... TO FIND THE MASK AT LAST... IN THE POSSESSION OF THIS SILLY CHILD! AND TO THINK, FOR A MOMENT I WAS FRIGHTENED!

WHAT IS THE PHRASE, KURT... ABOUT TAKING CANDY FROM A BABY...?

RAY-- STOP!

NO! SHE'S JUST A LITTLE GIRL!

FOOOOD FIIIIGHT!!!

DA-AD! COOL IT, WILL YOU? GOD-- YOU'RE SO EMBARRASSING!

OKAY, YOU ROTTEN LITTLE HITLER-BOYS! YOU WANT A FIGHT-- I'LL GIVE YOU ONE--

HA-HA-HA-HA! PRETTY GOOD, HUH, DAD?

THIS IS NOT A JOKE!

WELL, I TH'INK IT'S PRETTY FUNNY!

STUPID LITTLE GIRL! THAT IS NO CHILD'S *PLAY-THING* YOU WEAR--

NO *TOY* FOR YOU TO PRANCE ABOUT IN! *COUNTLESS MEN HAVE DIED ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR THAT MASK!*

SO?

EMILEEE--

SO I HAVE NO QUALMS ABOUT RE-MOVING IT FROM THE CORPSE OF A DEAD BRAT--

ME NEITHER!

FEUERRR!!

BLAM! BLAM!

BRRRRRRRT

OKAY...

...JOKE'S OVER.

NOW YOU'RE GONNA BE SORRY!

NOW, MY BROTHERS-- WE LIVE OR DIE FOR THE MASK!

ATTACK, MY FOLLOWERS-- THE MASK IS OURS!

PPTTH! NYAH NYAH NYAH NYAH! YOU CAN'T CATCH ME!

AXEL! HIS NECK-- I THINK IT'S BROKEN!

LEAVE HIM! GET THE GIRL'S FATHER!

THE REST OF YOU KEEP ANTONUCCI'S DOGS BACK! I'LL GET THE OTHER WEAPONS FROM THE VAN!

WE CAN'T LEAVE EMILY ALONE OUT THERE!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT HER -- WORRY ABOUT *US! WE'RE* NOT WEARING THE MA --

KELLAWAY! LOOK OUT!

CHUNT CHUNT

PASH!

AS I WAS SAYING -- THIS IS GOING TO BE VERY *MESSY* --

" THE BEST WE CAN DO IS TO TRY AND STAY OUT OF *HARM'S WAY* -- "

HAHAHA! YOU GUYS REALLY STINK! BOY, IS YOUR KUNG FU LOUSY!

LET ME SHOW YOU MY "PISSED-OFF LITTLE GIRL" KUNG FU STYLE! IT'S THE BEST!

SH-FNG!

HIIII!

CLATCH!

FEEL MY "CLEAN YOUR ROOM" SWEEP ATTACK WITH "TOO MUCH HOMEWORK" FIST!

WUAGH!

AAAHH! AAAGH!!

WATCH MY "CRYING TANTRUM" BOX'NG STYLE!

AAAAH!

PUM! PUM! PUM!

AND FINALLY-- MY "ONE THOUSAND NIGHTS WITHOUT NINTENDO" KICK!

HEY-- WHAT'S THIS? WHERE'D THIS COME FROM?

POISON?! EWWWW... GROSS!

IT IS A POISON NEEDLE, LITTLE ONE.

IT IS A FAST-ACTING POISON. SOON YOU WILL BE ASLEEP FOREVER... AND THE MASK--WILL BE *MINE!*

HMPH! I'M NO BABY-- I DON'T TAKE NAPS!

HERE--YOU TAKE IT! YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE THE REST!

:GASP!:

THIPP

NITE-NITE, SLEEPYHEAD--

HEY-- WHERE'S EVERYBODY GOING! I THOUGHT YOU CHICKENS WANTED TO FIGHT?!

THEY'RE GOING TO *HELL*, FRÄULEIN! AS ARE *YOU!*

AUF WIEDERSEHEN!

SHOOM

OH... YOU... D!--

FSHOOM

BA-BOOM!

CHOOM!

YA-CHOOM!

EMMY--
EMILY--?!

HURRY! SEARCH FOR HER BODY!

YOU JERKS! YOU BLEW UP OUR HOUSE! ALL MY STUFF WAS IN THERE!

WHAT AM I GOING TO WEAR TOMORROW, YOU BIG STUPID JERKS?!

SOB

NO...NO... IT CANNOT BE!

OH, YES IT CAN SO BE! NOW QUIT CRYING, YOU BIG BABY, AND TAKE IT LIKE A--

SAY? WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

VROOM

OH. IT'S A CAR.

EMILY! LOOK OUT!

RRRRRT!

VRRRRRM!

KRESH!

CHBAM!

OH, NO-- NOT AGAIN! RAAAY!

"WHERE'S EMILY?!"

HYCON CHEMICAL

KRRNG!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! WE GOT HER! WE GOT HER GOOD!

L-LIEUTENANT --A-ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

LIEUTENANT!

OH, NO... EMILY--

SHUT UP! WE DIDN'T GET NUTHIN' WITHOUT THAT MASK!

LORENZO, TURN THE CAR AROUND --WE GOTTA LOOK FOR THAT MASK!

HMMMM-- LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?!

AAAAAHHH!

WHOOPS-- THIS IS WHERE I GET OFF! LATER, BOYS! AND REMEMBER--

--IF YOU STINK--

AAAAAHHH!

RRRRRRRT

--DON'T DRIVE!!

BKRUNT

SPASH

JEEZ, MISTER... YOU LOOK TERRIBLE...

HYCON CHEMICAL

P-PLEASE... H-HELP ME...

SSSSS

AAAARGH!

BRRRRRRRRRRRT!

THAT IS THE SORT OF "HELP" YOUR DEAR FATHER CAN EXPECT, MEIN LIEBCHEN--

--IF YOU DO NOT SURRENDER THE MASK TO ME THIS INSTANT...

D-DADDY...?

EMILY-- DON'T DO IT! DON'T GIVE IT TO THEM! THEY'LL KILL YOU!

LISTEN TO ME, LITTLE GIRL -- NO MORE GAMES, NO MORE JOKES, UNDERSTAND --

--YOUR FATHER'S FATE... IS IN YOUR HANDS.

SO TELL ME NOW... WHAT WILL IT BE, EMILY... THE MASK--

--OR YOUR FATHER'S LIFE?

ALL RIGHT. I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU.

JUST STOP HURTING MY DADDY... PLEASE...

DIE MASKE! DIE MASKE!

EMILY...

GIVE IT! GIVE IT TO ME!

NO--

--I'LL LET MY DAD GIVE IT TO YOU!

GIVE IT TO 'EM, DAD!

AWAAHHHH-H

BRRTBRRT!

I'LL SHOW YOU TO PICK ON DEFENSELESS LITTLE GIRLS, YOU RATS!

HOW DO YOU LIKE IT? HOW'S THAT TASTE, HUH? HOW'S THAT FEEL?

WAK WAK CRAK KRAK

DADDY!

I KNOW YOU'RE NEVER SUPPOSED TO HIT A LADY--

SMAK AK

NOOOOO!

BUT THEN AGAIN, YOU'RE NO LADY--YOU'RE A LOUSY NAZI!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THE WINNER AND STILL CHAMP --MEEE!

I AM THE GREATEST OF ALL TIIME!

LOVE

HYCON CHEMICAL PAINT & DYE CORP.

YOU ARE *WRONG*, TUTTLE... YOU MAY HAVE *TRIUMPHED* ...

...BUT YOU'VE WON... NOTHING...

AXEL! NO! THE PETROL! YOU'LL KILL US ALL!

FL-CHK

EXACTLY--

...HEIL H--

YEEAARGH!

AAAAAAH!

OH, BOY--

FWOOOSH!

DADDEEEE--

DON'T WORRY, BABY--WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT, I SW--

WARNING! EXTREMELY FLAMMABLE

WHOAAA-- NELLY!!!

EMILY-- CLOSE YOUR EYES, BABY! CLOSE 'EM TIGHT AND TH'NK GOOD THOUGHTS AND DON'T BE AFRAID!

TRUST ME, PUMPKIN, EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE ALL RIGHT--

"--DADDY'S HERE--"

WHOOMP!

CHA-BOOM!..

BOOM!

CHA-BA-DOOM!

W-WE'RE ALIVE?

I TOLD YOU WE'D BE OKAY, KIDDO! YOU CAN'T GET HURT WITH THIS SUCKER ON, REMEMBER?

BUT HOW COME *I'M* OKAY? I'M NOT EVEN *BURNT*-- NOT EVEN A *LITTLE BIT!*

OH, THAT'S BECAUSE I PUT YOU IN MY MOUTH.

IN YOUR *MOUTH?*

YEAH, THAT'S WHY YOU'RE ALL STICKY. SAY-- THERE'S THE LIEUTENANT!

IS HE DEAD?

NAAH, JUST CONKED OUT. AS FOR THESE OTHERS, WELL, THERE'S NOTH'NG I CAN DO. EXCEPT BILL THEM, OF COURSE.

WHY THE LONG FACE, SWEETIE? WE WON, DIDN'T WE--

DADDY... STOP IT.

STOP WHAT?

NOW, EM--

PLEASE, DADDY, *PLEASE* TAKE OFF THE MASK--TAKE IT OFF NOW AND DON'T *EVER* PUT IT ON AGAIN!

IT MAKES PEOPLE DO BAD THINGS AND IT MAKES PEOPLE *DIE* AND I DON'T WANT YOU OR ANYONE ELSE TO DIE LIKE MOMMY!

STOP... BEING BIG-HEAD.

... PLEASE DADDY... I LOVE YOU... PLEASE...

OH, GOD... EMILY--

--I'VE WAITED SO LONG... *SO LONG* TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT TO ME AGAIN ...TO HEAR YOU SAY *ANYTHING* TO ME AGAIN...

...TO HEAR YOUR BEAUTIFUL VOICE -- TO HAVE MY BABY BACK...

I LOVE YOU TOO, EMILY...

OH, GOD I LOVE YOU TOO...

SKY CITY GAZETTE

INFERNO!!

BIG-HEAD DISAPPEARS AFTER DEADLY EXPLOSION

CITY OFFICIALS UNDER INVESTIGATION.

--THE NEXT THING I KNOW I WAKE UP IN A MOTEL SIX FORTY MILES AWAY...

A LUMP ON MY HEAD, A GRAND IN MY POCKET... AND THE KEYS TO THOSE NAZIS' CARS...

OH -- AND THIS *RING*. AND YES, THOSE DIAMONDS *ARE* REAL.

MAN *ALIVE*... THAT MUST BE WORTH A *FORTUNE!* A FEW MORE LIKE THAT AND A GUY COULD RETIRE FOR *LIFE*.

HM. THOSE TRIAD GUYS WERE WEARING TONS OF THIS STUFF, TOO.

THE TUTTLES SOUND LIKE GOOD PEOPLE, I HOPE THEY'RE BOTH OKAY.

YEAH. SOMEHOW I GET THE FEELING THEY'RE ALL RIGHT... IN FACT I'M ***SURE*** THEY ARE. WHAT I'M ***NOT*** SURE OF IS--

"--WHAT DID THEY DO WITH THAT DAMN MASK?"

WELL, THAT'S THAT. AND GOOD RIDDANCE. WE CAN DECIDE IF WE WANT TO TOSS THE KEY WHEN WE GET TO HONG KONG.

I FEEL WEIRD, DAD. I HOPE WE'RE DOING THE RIGHT THING...

I HOPE SO TOO, SWEETIE. BUT YOU KNOW, IF THERE WAS ANY REASON AT ALL FOR US TO FIND THAT MASK, WELL--

--MAYBE IT WAS BECAUSE SOMEONE DECIDED YOU AND I DESERVED A NEW LEASE ON LIFE. AND THE JEWELRY, AND THE BRIEFCASES OF MONEY WE FOUND IN THE GERMANS' CAR, THEY'LL ***GIVE*** US THAT NEW LIFE. ***OUR*** NEW LIFE, PUMPKIN.

NOW C'MON, EM. WE'VE GOT US A PLANE TO CATCH.

THANKS AGAIN, MR. PIERCE. I HOPE WE'LL BE DOING BUSINESS AGAIN SOON.

NOT VERY SOON, I'M AFRAID. MY DAUGHTER AND I ARE LEAVING ON AN OVERDUE VACATION.

I'M JEALOUS! WELL, YOU TWO ENJOY YOURSELVES THEN! TAKE CARE!

SAN DIEGO

THANKS--

--WE WILL!

END

WORLD TOUR

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title illustration
KEVIN MAGUIRE WITH BERNIE MIREAULT

POWER

Y DANGEROUS

NOT BAD. WITH A LITTLE WELDING, THEY'LL BE ABLE TO *USE* THAT DOOR AGAIN.

NEXT TIME I'LL TRY A BIT LESS PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE. HOLD DOWN THE DAMAGE AND MINIMIZE THE *NOISE*, TOO.

THIS IS VERY NICE *CRAFTSMANSHIP* FOR A SMALL BANK. ANOTHER INCH OF STEEL AND I WOULD'VE BEEN UP AGAINST IT!

HELLO, ONE AND ALL. HOW MANY DO WE *HAVE* TODAY?

72...84... 96!

AT FIVE SECONDS APIECE, THAT WOULD COME OUT TO...EIGHT MINUTES FOR THE LOT.

STARTING... *NOW!*

CLICK

CLANG!

CLANG!

CLANG!

TWELVE SECONDS OFF!

ALL THANKS TO NUMBER 2B STICKING...AND I'LL BET IT'S FULL OF *COSTUME JEWELRY!*

CLICK

WELL, DOESN'T MATTER. I GOT QUITE A HAUL *ANYWAY*, FROM THE LOOKS OF IT!

BUT-- WHAT'S *THIS*?

NUMBER 2B... *THAT* FIGURES!

THE STICKY ONES ARE *NEVER* WORTH THE TROUBLE... BARNEY MUST'VE TOLD ME THAT A HUNDRED TIMES!

I WISH OLD BARNEY WERE *HERE* RIGHT NOW. MAYBE HE *IS*, SORT OF LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER...

THIS IS THE *POLICE*! COME OUT WITH YOUR *HANDS UP*! WE HAVE YOU *COMPLETELY SURROUNDED*!

HUH!?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "SURROUNDED"? THERE ARE ONLY TWO COPS IN THE *WHOLE TOWN*!

AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING *HERE*? YOU NEVER LEAVE THE DONUT HUT EARLIER THAN *11:30*!

THE JOKE'S ON *YOU*, YA STUPID CROOK! ROBBIE'S SEEING A NEW WOMAN, SO HE JUST WENT ON A *DIET*!

SHUT UP, YOU IDIOT!

HEY, DO YOU GUYS KNOW IF THEY'RE STILL ENFORCING THAT *THREE-STRIKES-AND-YOU'RE-OUT* LAW IN THIS STATE?

THAT'S RIGHT, SCUMBAG--WE DON'T *TOLERATE* YOUR KIND IN CALIFORNIA!

I *CAN'T* END UP LIKE BARNEY, DYING IN THE SLAMMER! BETTER TO GO OUT IN A BLAZE OF GUNFIRE!

BUT JUST IN CASE A MIRACLE HAPPENS AND I MAKE IT OUT OF HERE ALIVE, I'D BETTER DISGUISE MY *FACE*...

...AND I SWEAR ON BARNEY'S GRAVE THAT IF I DO FIND A WAY OUT OF THIS, THEN I'M GETTING AS FAR AWAY FROM THIS STATE AS POSSIBLE AND GOING STRAIGHT!

GIVE YOURSELF UP! THERE'S NO OTHER WAY OUT OF THERE!

URK!

C'MON OUT AND WE'LL PLAY COPS AND ROBBERS!

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT!

BUT I SEEM TO REMEMBER SOME KIND OF OATH ON BLARNEY'S STONE TO GET AS FAR OUT OF THIS STATE OF EXISTENCE AS POSSIBLE...

WHIRRRRRRRR

...AND GO STRAIGHT TO HELL IN A HANDBASKET!

YWOOOOOOOOOO

OOOOOOOOOO

RIBIT! CROAK

HANG ON, ROBBIE!

CLATTER

KRINCHK

ERK.ERK.ERK.ERK.ERK!

WHY THE *ALARM*, SENTRY'?

WE'VE GOT AN *INTRUDER*, SARGE! UP THERE ON *LEVEL 13!*

ANYONE LEGIT WOULD'VE COME PAST ME AND *SIGNED IN*, RIGHT?

CAREFUL, MEN!

THIS MAY BE ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE *DEMONS* ESCAPED FROM THE VORTEX!

ULP!

GENERAL *BLAIRE!*

SORRY TO DISTURB YOU, *SIR!*

AWAITING FURTHER ORDERS, *SIR!*

YOU WANT AN *ORDER*, SERGEANT?

HOW ABOUT... "*FALL IN*"?

GENERAL BLAIRE!

THIS IS THE STORY OF GENERAL BLAIRE, A MAN WHO HAS SEEN TOO MUCH.

AS A RESULT, HE'S LOST THE WILL TO MAKE A DECISION -- AND THEREFORE THE ABILITY TO COMMAND HIS MEN.

HIS PSYCHIATRIST SUGGESTS THAT THIS DEPRESSION IS A RESULT OF REPRESSED ANGER, AN INNER STRUGGLE BETWEEN BLAIRE'S ID, EGO, AND SUPEREGO, BUT THE GENERAL KNOWS BETTER...

IT'S THE **WORLD** THAT'S CRAZY AND SPLINTERING APART, NOT HIM!

IN FACT, HIS PSYCHIATRIST'S FREUDIAN ANALYSIS CAN MORE APTLY BE APPLIED TO THE THREE TROUBLED CITIES AT THE HEART OF THIS COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS, WITH STEEL HARBOR AS ID, ARCADIA AS EGO, AND GOLDEN CITY AS SUPEREGO.

THEY ARE THE THREE CENTERS OF HUMANITY IN GENERAL BLAIRE'S WORLD, DIVIDED AND AT ODDS WITH ONE ANOTHER AND LOSING THE BATTLE AGAINST THE ALIEN ENVIRONMENT KNOWN AS THE VORTEX...

...WHICH REPRESENTS CHAOS AND UTTER DESTRUCTION.

AND AS GENERAL BLAIRE'S GRANDPAPPY THE COLONEL USED TO SAY: IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM, JOIN 'EM!

!HASTA LA VORTEX, BABY!

AWESOME!

THE GENERAL JUST TOOK THE *NESTEA PLUNGE!*

HEY, SARGE...WE DON'T HAVE TO OBEY THAT *LAST COMMAND*, DO WE?

SHUT UP, STANGLE.

THEY'LL SAY I WAS CRAZY...BUT *NOTHING* HAS MADE SENSE SINCE THIS INFERNAL DOORWAY TO HELL OPENED UP!

I CAN JUST SEE THE EXPRESSION ON *SNIDER'S* FACE WHEN HE HEARS ABOUT THIS...

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A *LEAP OF FAITH*, GENERAL? WE CAN TAKE ONE *TOGETHER*, YOU KNOW!

I'LL BELIEVE IN *YOU* IF YOU BELIEVE IN *ME!*

GET THE *CHIEF OF STAFF* ON THE PHONE FOR ME, KAREN. HE WAS RIGHT, BLAIRE MUST BE RELIEVED OF HIS COMMAND *IMMEDIATELY!*

I WISH WE COULD'VE TAKEN *THIS* LEAP TOGETHER, SNIDER!

WE DID HAVE *ONE* THING IN COMMON, THOUGH. YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE... :GASP:... IN *ME*...

...AND I... :CHOKE:! DIDN'T BELIEVE...

IN ME EITHER--:X:

OOF!

AHOY! A STOWAWAY, IS IT?

?

RUNNING AWAY FROM HOME, LITTLE BOY? WELL, SO AM I!

THIS IS A LOT LIKE A MARK TWAIN STORY, HUH? BUT YOU KNOW WHAT AUNT POLLY SAID:

SPARE THE PADDLE...SPOIL THE CHILD!

SO GET PADDLING, JUNIOR!

I'M YOUR CAPTAIN...YEAH, YEAH, YEAH, YEAH.

OH, AND GIVE A YANK ON THAT STRING BEHIND YOU, TOO, YOUNG WHELP.

SEE HERE, MAN! IF THIS BOAT IS MOTORIZED, THEN WHY WERE YOU HAVING ME--

BRRUP BRUP-BRUP

YOU SIMPLY CANNOT BEAT AN EVINRUDE!
ROOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOW
AHEM! LAND HO, MISTAH CHRISTIAN!
DROP ANCHOR!

LOOK OUT!

C'MON, C'MON!

klik- klik- klik

YAAAAAAHHH!

AIIIEEEEE!

WOW

DING

DRAT THE LUCK! WHO TOOK THE BAIT?

I'LL TAKE THE BAIT, YOU DEMON FROM HELL!

BLAM BLAM BLAM

WAIT A MINUTE--NOW I REMEMBER WHERE I PUT THE BAIT!

COME TO POPPA, WRIGGLY!

UGH! I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW WORMS CAN BE STUCK WITH A HOOK AND STILL LIVE!

IT BOGGLES THE MIND!

YEOW! I'VE GOT A LIVE ONE HERE!

AT LEAST I HOPE IT'S A LIVE ONE--I HATE IT WHEN ONE OF MY LEGS GOES DEAD!

OH, YEAH, THIS ONE'S GOT LOTS OF KICK LEFT IN IT!

WHERE WAS ALL THAT ENERGY WHEN I WAS TRYING TO LEARN TO SQUARE DANCE, YOU CREEP?!

WHAM!

HERE YA GO, SARGE.

UH... THANKS.

AH, THAT'S BETTER! TWO LEGS--NO WAITING!

KLONK

OUCH! OUCH! OUCH!

SCHWW--UKK!

WHEW! THAT'S BETTER!

NOW THAT I'M WHOLE AGAIN, IT'S TIME TO KEEP MY PROMISE TO BARNEY AND GO STRAIGHT!

BUT THIS LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF *MILITARY INSTALLATION*, SO I'D BETTER PULL ONE MORE MINOR HEIST BEFORE I QUIT FOR GOOD!

CHECK ME OUT, BARNEY--I'M *SGT. ROCK!*

HEH-HEH HEH!

WHO *SAYS* NOTHING'S EASY IN EASY COMPANY?

YES, IT WAS GENERAL BLAIRE! HE THREW HIMSELF INTO THE VORTEX AND THEN CAME BACK OUT WITH SOME KIND OF DEMON!

NO, THE CAPTAIN ALREADY CALLED DR. SNIDER--HE'S ON HIS WAY!

SSSSSNIDER!

C'MON, MEN! LET'S KICK THE SNOT OUT OF THIS FREAK!

SNOT?

W-ATCHOO!

HEY, DON'T FORGET, YOU ASKED FOR IT BY NAME!

H-HELLLP!

DAVID!

WAKE UP, DAVID!

C'MON, THIS IS REALLY IMPORTANT!

WHAT IS IT THIS TIME, ZERO? 'CALISE IF IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD, I'VE GOT AN ALGEBRA EXAM TOMORROW.

OKAY, I'M DRESSED AND ON MY WAY. NOW, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL??

THE BASE IS UNDER ATTACK BY SOME KIND OF INTRUDER!

AND THIS INTRUDER CAME OUT OF THE VORTEX, RIGHT?

NO PROBLEMO! WE'VE STOPPED PLENTY OF THOSE GLORIFIED SEA MONKEYS IN THE PAST!

LET'S DO IT AGAIN, ZERO!

YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND, DAVID!

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

ERK ERK ERK ERK

HEY, BUDDY-- WHAT GOES ON AROUND HERE?

=COFF COFF= WELL, I HEAR THERE WAS AN INTRUDER...

...UHHH...

...AN INTRUDER AT THE MILITARY BASE.

AHEM! OVER YONDER, BIG FELLA.

THANKS, CITIZEN!

PHEW! THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE!

I THOUGHT FOR A MINUTE THERE THAT HE WAS GOING TO DRIVE ME INTO THE GROUND LIKE A--

--R-R-R-

RAILROAD

SP-SP-

SP-SPIKE!

WHAM! WHAM! WHAM! WHAM!

THOUGHT YOU COULD FOOL ME, HUH?

WHY, FOR TEN CENTS, I'D TWIST YOUR UGLY HEAD OFF!

YOU'RE ONLY SAYING THAT BECAUSE YOU KNOW I CAN'T REACH MY CHANGE!

SAY, YOU'RE NOT REALLY THAT BIG, AFTER ALL!

IS THAT YOUR LIMIT? A MEASLY FIFTY FEET?

FIFTY FEET NOTHING! MY NAME IS HERO ZERO, PAL, AND I GO FROM ZERO TO THREE HUNDRED FEET IF I FEEL LIKE IT!

YEAH, WELL THAT'S PRETTY HARD TO BELIEVE FROM THIS ANGLE, SHORTY!

DON'T LISTEN TO HIM, DAVID! HE'S JUST TRYING TO--

SHORTY?! I'LL SHOW YOU WHO'S SHORT, YOU LITTLE CREEP!

THWOM!

HOW DOES THE GROUND LOOK FROM THIS ANGLE, WISE GUY? NOTICE IT GETTING FARTHER AND FARTHER AWAY??

W-ATCHOO!

GESUNDHEIT.

HEY, WHERE'D HE GO?? HE GOT SLIPPERY ALL OF A SUDDEN AND THEN HE--

OH, YUCK!

I TRIED TO WARN YOU, DAVID!

I THINK HE CLIMBED INSIDE OUR *ARMOR!*

OH, NO! NOT *THAT!* DON'T-- DON'T--

HEEHEEHEE HAAAAHAHA-- DON'T *TICKLE* ME!!

BWAAAHAAAAHA-- I CAN'T *STAND* IT-- NO, NO, NO, PLEASE STOP, PLEASE STA-*HAHAHAH!*

OH-HOHOHO! C-CAN'T *TAKE* BEING TICKLED-- *HWA! HWA!*--MY ONLY ≷GASP≷ WEAKNESS!

G-GET-- HEEHEEHEE-- SO LIGHTHEADED-- *HAWHAWHAW!*-- THAT AFTER A VERY FEW--MINUTES--

WHEEZE! WHEEZE! I--*HAHAHA*-- P-PASS--

P-PASS--*HA!* --*OOOUUUUUTT*--※

KABOOM

WH-WHAT THE HELL...

YOU THINK THAT WAS BAD? YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN AT GROUND HERO ZERO!

AND I REALLY MEAN THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN THERE, SIDNEY!

HUH? D-DO I KNOW YOU?

P-PUT ME DOWN! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING??

IT'S MY TURN TO SHRINK YOUR HEAD, SID--THE HARD WAY!

I'LL BELIEVE IN YOU IF YOU BELIEVE IN ME!

=GASP= BLAIRE!

!

FWUT

THAT WAS MERELY THE FIRST OF SEVEN MYSTICAL SHAFTS DESIGNED TO NEUTRALIZE YOUR ENERGY AURA, DEMON!

DO NOT FORCE ME TO UNLEASH THE OTHER SIX!

YOU GET RIGHT TO THE POINT, DON'T YOU?

BUT CHECK THIS OUT! HOW YOU GONNA HIT ME WHEN I'VE GOT THESE FRED ASTAIRE MOVES?

HAH!

KNOW THAT YOU HAVE PROVOKED KING TIGER WITH YOUR OBSCENE DISPLAY, EVIL ONE...

...AND IN THE PROCESS, BROUGHT ABOUT YOUR OWN DESTRUCTION!

THWIP THWIP THWIP THWIP

♪ DON'T STOP...TILL YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH! ♫

HOW'S THIS FOR A TARGET, TIGER QUEEN?

NYAAH-NYAH NYAH NYAAH--

--NYUK!

OOH...FEEL WEIRD! POWER ...DRAINING AWAY!

TH-WOK!

THE BEAST IS DEAD!

NEVER AGAIN WILL THE FORCES OF DARKNESS DARE TO MOCK THE POWERS OF GOODNESS AND LIGHT!

AIN'T I A STINKER!

KISS ME, YOU FOOL!

CALM YOURSELF, SIR! I'VE COMPLETELY *INCAPACITATED* THIS DEMON!

SEE?

B-B-B-BUT--!

OH, SORRY!

I'M SO ACCUSTOMED TO MAYHEM THAT I OFTEN FORGET HOW *SHOCKING* THESE SIGHTS CAN BE TO THE LAYMAN!

THE B-B-*BODY*!

PELÉ...

...EAT YOUR...

...HEART...

PUNT

...OUT!

UH-OH!

I THINK THIS SITUATION CALLS FOR A GOAL-ORIENTED APPROACH, DR. SNIDER!

NO.!!

NICE CATCH! BUT THIS IS SOCCER, SIDNEY!

DON'T YOU KNOW THERE'S A HEAVY PENALTY FOR USE OF HANDS??

GULP

SSSSSSSSS

OH, SURE, DROP THE BALL!

THE WAY YOU'VE TREATED ME, DOCTOR, IT'S NO WONDER I'M ON SUCH A SHORT FUSE!

GET DOWN! HE'S GOING TO--

SSSS

KA BOOM!

--BLOW!

WHEW

THAT WAS THE *STRANGEST* DEMON I'VE EVER ENCOUNTERED!

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, HE USED TO BE ONE OF MY *PATIENTS*!

A REAL LOOSE CANNON... WITH AN EXTREMELY ACTIVE *ID PERSONA* JUST BENEATH THE SURFACE, STRUGGLING TO BREAK FREE!

AHEM!

DA ID

VERONICA

VHS

HEY, SID! DID ANYONE EVER TELL YOU THAT YOU REALLY PUT THE "ANAL" IN ANALYST?

"DA" ID?

THAT'S "DAID" TO YOU--

--WHICH IS WHAT YOU-ALL'S ABOUT TO BE, BOY!

BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA

YE GODS!

KAPOW!

WHOOMP WHOOMP

WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE OUR WORK HERE IS DONE, GIRLS!

BETTY

SMEK

SMEK

VERONICA

5¢

I'VE GOT PLACES TO GUT AND PEOPLE TO SLAY!

DA ID

ANY IDEA WHERE HE MIGHT BE *HEADED*, DR. SNIDER?

WHEN I WAS TREATING HIM, HE HAD A *SEVERE COMPLEX* ABOUT THREE CITIES HE FELT REPRESENTED THE MORAL AND SPIRITUAL DECAY OF OUR CIVILIZATION...

...ARCADIA, GOLDEN CITY, AND STEEL HARBOR!

THOOM! THOOM!

MY DISABLED CAR IS JUST OVER THIS RIDGE. IF WE ROLL IT BACK ONTO ITS WHEELS, WE CAN USE IT TO *FOLLOW* HIM.

YES, BUT TO WHICH *DESTINATION*?

STEEL HARBOR!

BONE POINTS

IF THIS ISN'T THE "CATCH OF THE DAY," THEN I'LL EAT MY HADDOCK!

WHOA, STEADY THERE, OLD TIMER!

RELAX-- I'VE ALREADY REACHED MY LEGAL LIMIT!

YOUR PHOT
$3.00

DAD

da real STEEL HARBOR deal

--OTOGRAPH TAKEN YESTERDAY AT PIER TWELVE IS THE BEST GLIMPSE TO DATE OF THE GRIM VIGILANTE WHO CALLS HIMSELF "DA ID."

WITNESSES REPORT THAT HE TOOK ON THE *ENTIRE GANG* OF THE MOBSTER KNOWN AS MACE BLITZKRIEG SINGLE-HANDEDLY!

POLICE ARE WAITING BY BLITZKRIEG'S BEDSIDE FOR A STATEMENT... DOCTORS PREDICT THAT HE *WILL* PULL THROUGH!

MEANWHILE, DA ID IS CUTTING A SWATH OF DESTRUCTION THROUGH THE VERY *HEART* OF STEEL HARBOR! HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOMS ARE JAMMED, AND THERE AREN'T ENOUGH FIREMEN TO BATTLE ALL THE BLAZES!

MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF REAL ESTATE HAVE BEEN DESTROYED, AND THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES ARE HOMELESS TONIGHT IN THIS CONTINUING *MANMADE DISASTER!*

I'M SURE GLAD YOU'RE HERE, AVRAM! IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S HEADED *THIS WAY!*

CONSIDERING WHAT HE DID TO BLITZKRIEG, IT'S A SHAME YOUR OLD *BOUNCER'S* NOT AROUND.

DA ID

OLD GRANDAD, STRAIGHT UP!

YEAH, REMEMBER THE TIME OLD *MOTORHEAD* TOOK OUT BLITZKRIEG?

IF HE HADN'T GONE OFF WITH THAT CIRCUS, THIS ID JERK WOULD BE *TOAST* BY NOW!

THERE YA GO, PAL.

THANK YOU, MY GOOD MAN! IT'S CERTAINLY A PLEASURE TO FIND A FRIENDLY ESTABLISHMENT IN THIS CURRENT CLIMATE OF FEAR AND MISTRUST!

WHY, THE LAST THREE BARS I PATRONIZED WERE SO HOSTILE TO ME THAT I WAS FORCED TO BURN THEM TO THE GROUND AND *BUTCHER* THE HELP!

YOW!

WELL, HEL-LO, BABE!

HOW 'BOUT LETTING A LONELY STRANGER BUY YOU A DRINK?

I'LL PASS! YOU SEE, I OWN THIS BAR.

MY NAME IS BARB WIRE...

WAS IT SOMETHING I SAID?

...AND I REALLY HATE TO BE CALLED BABE!

KA BAM

rit tit tit

rit tit tit

rit tit tit

WELL, NOW I'M IN LOVE!

SORRY, GIRLS, BUT I WON'T BE NEEDING YOU ANYMORE! MY NEW CHICK HAS MORE FIREPOWER AND TWICE THE KICK!

DA

RRRRAOWWW!

VHS

5¢

VERONICA

THE LADY MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT SHE'S NOT INTERESTED!

YOU WANNA KEEP THAT HAND, SPORT?

DA

SKR-E-NCH!

HERE... IT'S ALL YOURS!

DA

THANK YOU.

SINCE WE ARE JOKING, I MUST TELL YOU THAT THIS DEMONSTRATION WILL COST YOU AN *ARM* AND A *LEG*!

BZZ

KLIK

HEY, THAT'S A GOOD TRICK!

HANDY, YOU MIGHT SAY!

WZZZZT!

THUD

THUD

GEE, I'VE NEVER BATTLED A SWISS ARMY KNIFE BEFORE!

LET ME GUESS: YOUR BOTTLE-OPENER AND CORKSCREW ATTACHMENTS WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN LANDING YOU THIS POSITION!

AVRAM, GET HIM OUT OF HERE BEFORE HE TRASHES THE PLACE!

SCHHWUK

ACTUALLY, I HAVE OTHER QUALIFICATIONS THAT I'LL BE HAPPY TO SHOW YOU--

WHOMP

--OUTSIDE!

SORRY ABOUT THE MESS, JEFF!

HEY, AT LEAST THESE TWO CLEAN UP THEIR OWN BODY PARTS!

NICE OF YOU TO GIVE ME A RUNNING START, SWISS, OLD PAL!

I AM CALLED THE MACHINE.

WHEN I WAS HUMAN, I MIGHT HAVE APPRECIATED YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR.

BUT I VERY MUCH DOUBT IT!

KLOP

BEEP! HONK!

!

RIIPP

TEARRR

SCHHWUK

KREEEK

ALL SET?

READY WHEN YOU ARE!

HEY, WHAT GIVES?!

I PROMISED TO REVEAL TO YOU SOME OF MY OTHER TALENTS!

WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE...ED McMAHON??

YEEOOWCH!

HMMMMM

I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE GIVEN YOU YOUR KEISTER BACK! THEN IT'D BE YOUR FAT IN THIS FRYING PAN!

SURELY YOU RECOGNIZE THAT I AM IMMUNE TO THE EFFECTS OF ELECTRICAL CURRENT!

I ABSOLUTELY REFUSE--YEOW!--TO TALK TO ANYONE--YAIII!--WHO CALLS ME--

ZZZZAPP

ZZZAPP

--SHIIIIRRRRLEY!

SPROI-OING

1,500... 1,600...1,650 DOLLARS!

SOLDIER, YOU JUST BOUGHT YERSELF A TRUCKLOAD A' SPLURTS!

ONE FOR THE ROAD, OKAY?

MMMM

YOU'RE SURE I'LL HAVE NO PROBLEM SELLING THOSE THINGS?

THEY SHOULDA CALLED 'EM HOTCAKES, 'CAUSE THAT'S HOW FAST THEY GO!

BUT SOME MARKETING WHIZ NAMED 'EM AFTER THE SOUND THE CREAM FILLING MAKES WHEN YA SQUEEZE 'EM! HAR-HAR...

BUT YOU JUST SQUEEZED ONE, AND I DIDN'T HEAR ANY--

GOOD LUCK, PRIVATE!

:COFF COFF:

I HOPE THIS PANS OUT, BARNEY! I KNOW I SWORE ON YOUR GRAVE THAT I'D GO STRAIGHT...

...BUT I JUST TRADED MY WHEELS AND ALL THE MONEY I HAD FOR A TRUCKLOAD OF PASTRIES THAT PROBABLY DON'T EVEN MAKE THE RIGHT NOISE!

Splurts

the cream-filled cakes that sound delicious

INCOMING.

DA ID

HUH?

OOF

SPLURT!

CRAASH!

WELL, THE *SOUND* WAS NO PROBLEM.

BUT IT'S SURE GONNA BE HARD TO *HITCHHIKE* LIKE THIS...

I DON'T *KNOW* ABOUT THIS PLAN OF YOURS, AVRAM!

IT *WAS* BRILLIANT TO RELOCATE THE FIGHT TO THIS CLOSED ELECTRONICS WAREHOUSE WHERE YOUR POWERS WILL GIVE YOU THE EDGE...

...BUT YOU HAVE MORAL QUALMS ABOUT THE PART *YOU* MUST PLAY IN THE PLAN, CORRECT?

klik

LISTEN, BARB, THORNY PROBLEMS SOMETIMES DEMAND *UGLY SOLUTIONS!* JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES AND IT'LL BE OVER BEFORE YOU KNOW IT!

WAIT HERE AND I'LL CALL YOU WHEN IT'S *TIME.*

Circuit Shortcut
Your Shortcut to Selection & Savings

HELLO?

ARE YOU AFRAID TO COME OUT AND *FACE* ME?

No, I JUST THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE FUN TO PLAY TAG...

FINE.

BUT IN *THAT* CASE--

POWER OUTLET

--YOU'RE IT!

DEAD

OOH...

THIS MODERN TECHNOLOGY SURE CAN GIVE A GUY A HEADACHE!

JUST LIE BACK AND TRY TO *ENJOY* THE EXPERIENCE.

8

VR

DA ID

YOU ARE ONE SICK DUDE, Y'KNOW THAT?

=PANT PANT PANT=

DA ID

HEY! SHOO!

GET OUTTA HERE, YA JIVE TURKEY!

PECK PECK

NOBODY'S STRIPPING MY CARCASS WITHOUT A FIGHT!

SQUAWK?

GRRRRR!

TOUGHEST, STRINGIEST OLD BIRD I EVER TASTED!

VR

POK

HA! THAT WASN'T SO TOUGH!

AND IT TASTED JUST LIKE CHICKEN!

VR

AND NOW I'M GONNA STRANGLE YOU WITH YOUR OWN WIRING, YOU ARCHAIC, 8-BIT EGGBEATER!

UHH... BARB?

IT'S *TIME*, BARB!

THIS ONE'S *MINE*, AVRAM!

OH, YEAH, HE'S *ALL* MINE!

HUH?! BUT THEN... WHY DID YOU ATTACK ME BEFORE??

I WAS JUST PLAYING *HARD TO GET*, YOU BIG DREAMBOAT!

BUT WHAT GIRL COULD RESIST *YOUR* CHARMS FOR LONG?

WELL... YEAH, I GUESS--

OH, *TAKE* ME! TAKE ME *NOW*!

MMMPH!

I KNEW YOU'D COME AROUND, BABE!

THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE AS DIFFICULT AS I THOUGHT!

IS HE READY YET, AVRAM?

OH, BABE! OH, BABE!

GIVE HIM ANOTHER MINUTE, BARB.

PULL HIS LEGS A LITTLE FARTHER APART.

LET'S GO ON A COUNT OF THREE, BARB.

FORGIVE ME IF I DON'T WATCH-- I GUESS THERE'S STILL SOME MAN LEFT IN ME, AFTER ALL!

JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES, AVRAM! IT'LL BE OVER BEFORE YOU KNOW IT!

ONE...

TWO...

THR--

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
MUSIC SHOP AND FILM OPEN
ROZIER MUSIC AND FILM
AL BANK
RISTORANTE

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
EEEEEEEEE
loretto's pizza coffee
SAY, ISN'T THAT--?
YES, I'D BETTER TURN AROUND.
EEEEEEEEEEEEEE
I HAVE TO BE CAREFUL! MY FRIEND RIKKI WILL KILL ME IF I WRECK HER CAR AGAIN.
SKREEECH
LOUSY LUCK JUST MISSING HIM LIKE THIS, HUH?
WE'LL CATCH HIM AT THE NEXT STOP.
ARCADIA 850 mi

SO, LIKE I SAY, THIS GUY WAS RAISIN' A RUCKUS IN THE BAR. AND I WAS BUSY AT THE TIME REARRANGING HIS FRIEND'S *RIB CAGE*...

...SO MY BOSS, BARB WIRE, THE OWNER OF THE BAR, WALKS OVER TO THE DIMWIT AND TELLS HIM TO GET OUT OR SHE'LL *KICK* HIM OUT!

NOW, BARB'S THIS LITTLE BLONDE NUMBER, SO THE GUY MAKES THE FATAL MISTAKE OF LAUGHING AT HER... AND *THAT'S* WHEN IT HAPPENED!

WHAT HAPPENED, FRANK?

QUIET, DOROTHY! LET HIM *FINISH!*

WELL, SHE *KICKED* HIM OUT, ALL RIGHT...

...KICKED HIM SO HARD BETWEEN THE LEGS THAT HE *FLEW* STRAIGHT OUT OF THAT BAR AND LANDED ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE STREET!

AW, C'MON!

NOBODY COULD KICK A GUY THAT FAR!

I'VE GOT *BETTER* THINGS TO DO THAN SIT HERE AND LISTEN TO SUCH SILLY, EXAGGERATED--

HEY, LOOK! THAT RUBE'S COME FROM THE DIRECTION OF *STEEL HARBOR!*

AND IT DON'T LOOK LIKE HE'S GONNA STOP TILL HE HITS *ARCADIA!*

WOW... SHE'S BEEN *WORKIN'* ON IT!

EEEEEEEEEEE

STEEL HARBOR.

HELL.

WE'RE STILL ONLY IN STEEL HARBOR.

EVERY MINUTE WE STAY IN THIS PLACE WE GET WEAKER. AND EVERY MINUTE CHARLIE BLAIRE SPENDS IN ARCADIA HE GETS STRONGER.

HE KNOWS HOW TO BUILD AN ARMY, HOW TO DEFEND A CITY.

BUT HIS METHODS HAVE RECENTLY BECOME ...UNSOUND. WHICH IS WHY THE ARMY SENT ME AFTER HIM, TO TERMINATE HIS COMMAND.

TERMINATE WITH "EXTREME PREJUDICE."

I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY WANT THIS MAN DEAD. FOURTH GENERATION WEST POINT, TOP OF HIS CLASS. VIETNAM. AIRBORNE. ABOUT A HUNDRED DECORATIONS, ETC.

HE HAD A PERFECT CAREER. MAYBE TOO PERFECT.

ALL THAT PERFECTION HAS VERY OBVIOUSLY DRIVEN HIM INSANE.

I'M BEING TRANSPORTED BY A CIVILIAN NAMED KING TIGER, A SELF-STYLED MARTIAL ARTS EXPERT AND MYSTIC. HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT MY MISSION...

...OR TRANSMISSIONS.

THANKS FOR CHARGING THAT TO YOUR CREDIT CARD, DR. SNIDER. I'LL SEE TO IT THAT MY FRIEND RIKKI PAYS YOU BACK!

6ES 6198

SO... GENERAL BLAIRE WAS A *PATIENT* OF YOURS?

I TREATED HIM BRIEFLY, JUST BEFORE HIS SUICIDE ATTEMPT. NATURALLY, I'M NOT AT LIBERTY TO DISCUSS THE *SPECIFICS* OF HIS CASE...

BLAIRE'S CLINICAL DEPRESSION WAS THE RESULT OF REPRESSED ANGER, AN INNER STRUGGLE BETWEEN HIS ID, EGO, AND SUPEREGO.

HE THOUGHT HE KNEW BETTER. SAID IT WAS THE **WORLD** THAT WAS CRAZY AND SPLINTERING APART, NOT HIM.

HE TALKED ABOUT THE THREE CITIES: STEEL HARBOR AS ID, ARCADIA AS EGO, AND GOLDEN CITY AS SUPEREGO. BRILLIANT THEORY, REALLY.

I WAS GOING TO WRITE A PAPER ON IT BEFORE BLAIRE TOOK HIS HEADER INTO THE VORTEX.

THEN HE CAME OUT WITH THAT INCREDIBLE THING ON HIS FACE...

...AND NOW I'VE GOT A **BOOK.**

BUT FIRST, I MUST GO TO THE MOST DANGEROUS PLACE IN THE WORLD.

I NEED TO GET INSIDE THAT MASK.

HIM
IM
IM

YOU TWO LOOK LIKE YOU'RE ON AN *EGO* TRIP!

BUT THE MAN ISN'T *SEEING* ANY VISITORS TODAY...SO YOU WON'T BE NEEDING THIS CAR!

YOUR JOURNEY'S *OVER*, CHUMPS!

HIM

HIM

THERE ARE *MANY* PATHS TO ENLIGHTENMENT, MY FRIEND...

...SO YOU WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO STAY OUT OF *OURS*!

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT! NOW THIS HAS BECOME AN *EGO* THING!

GREEN IS THE COLOR OF ENVY, LIKE THE MAN ALWAYS SAYS, AND HE OUGHTTA *KNOW*!

WHAT ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT?

PAY NO ATTENTION TO HIM, KING TIGER! HE'S JUST A LITTLE *PARROT*, CHIRPING FOR HIS MASTER!

A TALKING CAR! NOW I'VE *GOTTA* HAVE IT!

HIM

BUT IT'S *NOT* FOR SALE!

I-I DON'T BUY, LADY... I *TAKE*!

WELL, THEN, TAKE *THIS*!

BAM BAM

BAM BAM

I *DESPISE* A MAN WHO WON'T HAGGLE!

THANK YOU, GHOST. IT'S GOOD TO *SEE* YOU AGAIN!*

BUT...WHAT IS *HAPPENING* HERE??

*SEE *GHOST* OMNIBUS VOL. 1

THIS WASTE OF GOOD FLESH WAS A FOLLOWER OF THE MAN THE STREET GANGS CALL EGO. THEY WORSHIP HIM LIKE A *GOD*!

HE CAME TO TOWN ABOUT A *WEEK* AGO? AND THEY PAINT THEIR FACES GREEN TO RESEMBLE *HIS*?

YES. I CAN TAKE YOU TO HIM, BUT HE'S GUARDED BY HUNDREDS OF HIS FOLLOWERS... *EGOMANIACS*, THEY CALL THEMSELVES.

THEY ALL NEED TO HAVE THEIR *HEADS* EXAMINED!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT...WE'RE BRINGING ALONG A *PSYCHIATRIST*!

AFTER DETERMINING OUR PLAN OF ACTION, I GRADUALLY COME TO UNDERSTAND, TO MY HORROR, THAT THE YOUNG WOMAN IS DEAD.

IT'S SAID THAT HORROR HAS A FACE AND THAT YOU MUST MAKE A FRIEND OF HORROR...

...SO I DO.

YOU'RE SURE WE CAN JUST *WALTZ IN* LIKE THIS?

YES, ALL THE "BEST" PEOPLE SHOP HERE. THE PRICES ARE *INSANE!*

I'LL BE THE JUDGE OF THAT.

CLUB CARD MEMBERS ONLY!

THEY LOOK LIKE A BUNCH OF VEGETARIANS TO ME! LET'S *SHOOT* THEM!

IT'S ALL RIGHT, IT'S ALL RIGHT, IT'S ALL BEEN APPROVED!

THEY THINK YOU'VE COME TO TAKE HIM AWAY-- I HOPE THAT ISN'T TRUE!

THE MAN FEELS COMFORTABLE WITH HIS PEOPLE, HE FORGETS HIMSELF WITH HIS PEOPLE! HE'S EXPANDED MY MIND! THE MAN'S A POET-SAUSAGE-MAKER IN THE CLASSIC SENSE!

?

SUDDENLY, HE'LL GRAB YOU AND THROW YOU IN A CORNER AND SAY "DO YOU KNOW THAT 'AM' IS THE MIDDLE WORD IN 'HAMBURGER'?" IF YOU CAN KEEP YOUR HEADCHEESE WHEN ALL ABOUT YOU ARE LOSING THEIRS AND BLAMING IT ON YOU...

I'M A LITTLE MEAT CUTTER, HE'S A GREAT MEAT CUTTER. I SHOULD'VE BEEN A PAIR OF RAGGED BEARCLAWS SCUTTLING ACROSS SILENT BAKERIES...

I WAS JUST A LOWLY MEAT INSPECTOR WHEN I MET HIM, WITH MY CLIPBOARD AND MY #2 PENCIL AND MY NARROW-MINDED LIST OF POSSIBLE VIOLATIONS!

AND HE *MEANT* IT!

DID YOU SAY *ONE* POUND OF PICKLE LOAF?

AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE MAN SAID TO ME? HE SAID, "IF YOU EVER INSPECT MY MEAT AGAIN, I'M GOING TO CHOP YOU INTO LITTLE PIECES."

ONE POUND WITH A PICKLE LOAF, COMIN' RIGHT *UP*!

WHUDD

YIP!

AND JUST IN CASE *YOU* WERE THINKIN' OF TRYIN' ANYTHING, KATO...

...WELL, SUFFICE IT TO SAY, THIS AIN'T NO *LIVERWURST* IN MY HAND!

DON'T EVEN *THINK* ABOUT IT, LADY! GOOD HELP'S TOO HARD TO FIND THESE DAYS!

GET DOWN ON THE FLOOR, *FACE FIRST*!

OKAY... JUST DON'T *HURT* HIM!

SO LONG, SUCKERS!

WELL, YOU *DID* SAY FACE FIRST!

WHEN I FINALLY COME AROUND, I FIND MYSELF IN A SLAUGHTERHOUSE.

IT SMELLS LIKE SLOW DEATH...

...WHICH IS ABOUT PAR FOR THE COURSE IN A SLAUGHTERHOUSE.

THEN I REALIZE THAT I'M NOT ALONE.

ARE YOU AN ASSASSIN?

I-I'M A PSYCHIATRIST!

YOU'RE NEITHER! YOU'RE AN ERRAND BOY SENT BY GROCERY CLERKS TO COLLECT THE BILL!

BUT I'M TAPPED OUT RIGHT NOW, SO MAYBE WE CAN ARRANGE AN EASY PAYMENT PLAN OF TWENTY-FOUR MONTHLY INSTALLMENTS!

ME ME

ME TENDERIZE

I'VE COME HERE... TO RELIEVE YOU OF YOUR COMMAND, GENERAL BLAIRE.

WHY? ARE MY METHODS UNSOUND?

ME ME

ME TENDERIZER

THERE'S MADNESS IN YOUR METHODS, SIR!

DO YOU WANT TO HEAR MY DREAM?

I WATCH A SNAIL CRAWL ALONG THE EDGE OF A **STRAIGHT RAZOR**: THAT'S MY DREAM. THAT'S MY NIGHTMARE!

OH, YEAH, AND I'M **NAKED** AT THE TIME! AND I CAN'T FIND MY CLOTHES **ANYWHERE**! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW **EMBARRASSING** THAT IS WITH A BODY LIKE THIS??

ME

BLUB!

IF ANIMALS HAPPEN TO WANDER IN HERE, ISN'T IT OUR **DUTY** TO SLAUGHTER THEM?

WE MUST KILL THEM, **WE MUST** INCINERATE THEM, PIG AFTER PIG, COW AFTER COW, INSURANCE SALESMAN AFTER INSURANCE SALESMAN...

ME ME ME

AND THEY CALL ME AN ASSASSIN!

:GLUG GLUG:

WHAT DO YOU CALL IT WHEN THE ASSASSINS ACCUSE THE ASSASSINS? AND THEN THOSE SAME ASSASSINS ACCUSE THE OTHER ASSASSINS RIGHT BACK? AND THEN THE ORIGINAL ASSASSINS WHO ACCUSED THE OTHER ASSASSINS ARE ACCUSED OF BEING ASSASSINS BY THE ASSASSINS WHO THEY ACCUSED OF BEING ASSASSINS?

ME ENDERIZE

THOSE DOGGONED NABOBS! THEY REALLY GET MY GOAT!

THUMP

YEEAHHH!

THE MAN REALLY *LIKES* YOU! HE DOESN'T SHARE HIS PET GOAT WITH JUST ANYONE!

YEEAHHH!

HE'S GOT SOMETHING IN *MIND* FOR YOU! THE MAN IS *CLEAR* IN HIS MIND, BUT HIS SOUL IS PEA SOUP!

HE'S DYING! HE READS JOHN DENVER LYRICS *OUT LOUD*!

YEEAHHH!

I MEAN, WHAT'RE THEY GONNA *SAY* ABOUT HIM WHEN HE'S GONE? THAT HE WAS A KIND MAN? A WISE MAN? THE LIVING END? THE CAT'S PAJAMAS?

BULL!

MOOOOOO

THEY'RE GONNA SAY THAT HE THREW THE *LUAU* TO END ALL *LUAUS*!!

HIM

COWABUNGA!

BOO!

IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, X? I NOTICE THAT YOUR COSTUME IS *SLIGHTLY* BLOODIER THAN USUAL.

STAY OUT OF MY WAY, GHOST! I'VE COME TO *KILL* EGO!

OH, THAT'S RIGHT! "*ME AM X, PROTECTOR OF WATERFRONT!*" AND ALL THAT ROT.

HOW *BORING!*

YOU'VE FORGOTTEN WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE *ALIVE*, GHOST...

...TO FIGHT FOR SOMETHING YOU REALLY *CARE* ABOUT!

KISS UP TO TH OOK

HEY, ISN'T THAT AN *ASSASSIN*?

WHO ARE *YOU* TO CALL SOMEONE AN ASSASSIN, YOU ASSASSIN!

HE'S NOT AN ASSASSIN, *YOU'RE* THE ASSASSIN FOR CALLING SOMEONE AN ASSASSIN JUST FOR CALLING SOMEONE ELSE AN ASSASSIN!

HIM HIM

I'VE TAUGHT THEM WELL! THEY THINK ONLY OF THEMSELVES!

IF I WASN'T SO SELF-CENTERED, THIS WOULD BE INCREDIBLY REWARDING!

KISS UP TO THE

NO ONE COULD SAVE YOU NOW ANYWAY! YOU SHOULD HAVE HEEDED THE *WARNING* I GAVE YOU!

DON'T REMIND ME! I USED UP TWENTY DRUMS OF TENDERIZER SWABBING YOUR GOLDARNED MARK OFF MY NOGGIN!

:SIGH: BUT AS LONG AS WE HAVE TO DO THIS THING, I GUESS WE MIGHT AS WELL DO IT IN STYLE...

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! FOR YOUR AMAZEMENT AND DELIGHT, I WILL NOW PERFORM THE MOST DANGEROUS AND FAN-TAS-TIC-AL FEAT EVER ATTEMPTED ON ANY STAGE!

WITH THE AID OF MY LOVELY ASSISTANT, I WILL SEPARATE MY BODY INTO SEVEN DISTINCT PIECES!

AND THEN, JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU HAVE BEEN DAZZLED BEYOND ALL HUMAN RECKONING, I WILL RE-CON-STI-TUTE MYSELF BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES!

DON'T *COUNT* ON IT, FREAK!

I'VE NEVER SEEN A MAN SO BROKEN UP AND RIPPED APART.

EVEN THE ARMY WANTED HIM DEAD, AND THAT'S WHO HE ALWAYS TOOK HIS ORDERS FROM ANYWAY.

WH-WHERE AM I?

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME?

DR. SNIDER! WHO TIED YOU UP?

IT'S ME-- GENERAL BLAIRE! DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME??

HE CAN'T SEE YOU. YOU'RE A GHOST.

JUST LIKE ME.

YOU MEAN... I'M INVISIBLE? AND...AND... IMMATERIAL?

LIKE IN A CARTOON?

DISCONCERTING, AIN'T IT?

BUT YOU'LL GET USED TO IT...IN A CENTURY OR TWO!

OH, I'M STARTING TO REMEMBER NOW! I DID THIS TO MYSELF!

I THREW MY LIFE AWAY!

WHAT?

YEAH; WELL AT LEAST YOU WEREN'T *MURDERED!* BUT DON'T LET ME INTERRUPT YOUR LITTLE SELF-PITY PARTY!

YOU MEN KILL ME--IN MORE WAYS THAN *ONE!*

MURDERED?

I'M SORRY! I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE SO *RUDE!*

BUT PLEASE TELL ME--IS *THIS* WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE DEAD? SO COLD AND EMPTY?

HOW DO YOU STAND IT? WHERE DO YOU... *LIVE?*

I SLEEP IN A *CRYPT!*

DO YOU HAVE ANY *OTHER* QUESTIONS?

SO MUCH ANGER! *THAT'S* WHY YOU'RE STILL HERE, ISN'T IT?

WHY WE'RE *BOTH* STILL HERE, POOR THINGS!

POOR THINNINGS...

WAIT!

TA-DA!

ME ME

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

AND NOW, FOR MY GRAND FINALE--SO TO SPEAK--I SHALL USE THIS ORDINARY MICROPHONE TO MAKE MYSELF, THIS BUILDING, AND EVERYONE IN IT DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY AND FOR ALL TIME!

YOU SEE, I HAVE JUST REALIZED, THANKS TO A TINY VOICE INSIDE MY HEAD, THAT I AM A TERRIBLE MENACE TO MANKIND!

AND AS SUCH, THE ONLY PERSON WHO HAS ANY CHANCE OF STOPPING ME... IS ME!

tap tap tap

AND I MUST BE... STOPPED! SO...

BASE TO EAGLE! BASE TO EAGLE! COMMENCE FIRESTRIKE--TARGET OH-ONE-NINER!

REPEAT! COMMENCE FIRESTRIKE-- TARGET OH-ONE-NINER!

ME

OMIGOD! THAT'S AN *ACTIVE* MILITARY ALERT CODE!

WITHIN MINUTES, THIS ENTIRE PLACE WILL BE REDUCED TO *ASHES*!

♪ OH, NOTHIN' COULD BE FINER THAN TO NAPALM OH-ONE-NINER IN THE MO-O-ORNING... ♪

HOLD STILL AND I'LL CUT YOU *LOOSE*, KING TIGER.

DON'T WORRY, DR. SNIDER! I'LL GET YOU OUT OF HERE!

HURRY! I CAN HEAR THE HELICOPTERS IN THE DISTANCE ALREADY!

♪ NOTHIN' COULD BE SWEETAH THAN TO SIZZLE LIKE FAJITAS IN THE MO-O-ORNING... ♪

EVERYBODY!

HEY, DON'T *MESS* WITH ME, MAN! I'VE GOT TO GET THIS COLD-CUT PLATTER INTO THE LUAU BEFORE ALL HELL BREAKS --

NO! NOT THE SEW--

KERSPLASH!

WHAT'S THAT MUSIC?

IT'S "ARCADIAN RHYTHMS."

REALLY SCARES THE BEJEEZUS OUT OF THE *NATIVES!*

JOHNSON

DID YOU HEAR ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN *ARCADIA* LAST WEEK?

YEAH, JUST LIKE *STEEL HARBOR* THE WEEK BEFORE!

GOLDEN CITY

FSSSST

FUCK

IF THAT GREEN-FACED TURD CAME TO GOLDEN CITY, HE WOULDN'T LAST A *DAY*!

THAT'S FOR SURE! *GRACE* WOULD KICK HIS BUTT SO FAST HE'D BE BEGGING FOR MERCY!

GREETINGS, TINY MORTALS! WITH MY TELESCOPIC HEARING, I **OVERHEARD** YOUR DEROGATORY COMMENTS ABOUT MY PERSON!

BUT REST ASSURED THAT I HAVE LONG SINCE TRANSCENDED THE HUMAN PLANE AND NOW POSSESS THE POWER TO **RISE ABOVE** SUCH PICAYUNE PROVOCATION!

MY NAME IS UNPRONOUNCEABLE TO YOUR FLESHY TONGUES, BUT YOU MAY ADDRESS ME HENCEFORTH AS THE HERO FORMERLY KNOWN AS SUPEREGO!

NOW TAKE ME TO THIS "GRACE" WUSS SO I CAN WIPE THE **FLOOR** WITH HER!

IF YOU'RE THIS "HERO FORMERLY KNOWN AS SUPEREGO," THEN WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO CALL YOU *NOW*?

HE LOOKS LIKE A BIG *LOUNGE LIZARD* TO ME!

OR HOW ABOUT...THE *CRIMSON CREEP*?

IF YOU LITTLE, JUVENILE-DELINQUENT, GRAFFITI ARTISTS KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU, YOU'LL CALL ME "SIR"!

YOU MEAN LIKE SIR *CUSSCLOWN*?

YEAH, OR SIR *PLUSCHEESE*!

NO, WAIT A MINUTE! I'VE *GOT* IT! YOU'RE SIR--

--CUMCISIONNnn

WAIT FOR IT!

ZZZZZZZ

SLASH

YES!

ANOTHER BRILLIANT USE OF THE SEWER-BATH GAMBIT BY YOURS TRULY!

GIVE MY REGARDS TO THE FOREMAN AT THE SANITATION PLANT, SUCKERS!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

YOU JUST MISSED IT! I FLUSHED TWO NO-GOOD KIDS DOWN THAT MANHOLE!

I DIDN'T MISS ANYTHING!

BUT I WAS WONDERING HOW YOU'D LIKE IT IF SOMEONE DROPPED YOU DOWN A DEEP, DARK HOLE?

I GUESS WE'LL NEVER KNOW, LADY... BECAUSE I CAN FLY!

NYAAH-NYAH NYAH NYAAH--

NOT INSIDE A DIMENSIONAL PORTAL YOU CAN'T!

--NYA AAAA

BOY, HE'S REALLY PICKING UP SPEED!

AAAAAA

YES, THIS LOOKS LIKE A GOOD SPOT. HAND ME THAT CAN OF SPRAY PAINT, BOY!

GEE, GRACE, WE NEVER THOUGHT WE'D SEE YOU MARKING UP A WALL!

NO HARM DONE, BECAUSE YOU TWO ARE GOING TO SPEND YOUR NEXT TWENTY WEEKENDS PAINTING OVER THIS AND ALL OF THE OTHER WALLS YOU'VE DEFACED WITH GRAFFITI!

THAT'S YOUR PUNISHMENT...

--AAAAAAAAA

...AND THIS IS HIS!

KA

POW

GOLDEN CITY RULES

SO THE LESSON, BOYS, IS TO DO UNTO OTHERS AS *THEY* WOULD DO UNTO YOU!

THAT MAY NOT BE ACCORDING TO HOYLE, BUT THIS IS *MY* CITY AND I MAKE THE RULES!

GROAN

YOU *NEW* IN TOWN, PAL?

JUST GOT IN THIS MORNING FROM *ARCADIA*.

ISN'T THAT WHERE THEY HAD THE TROUBLE WITH THAT *GREEN-HEADED FREAK*?

HE'S *EVERYWHERE* I GO...LIKE SOME KIND OF MYSTICAL CURSE!

IT'S REALLY MY OWN *FAULT*... PLAY WITH FIRE AND YOU'RE BOUND TO GET BURNED!

YOU'VE JUST HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK...AND I CAN'T SAY AS I *BLAME* YOU!

I *NEVER* USED TO DRINK WHEN I WAS WITH MY OLD PAL BARNEY!

SINCE HE'S BEEN GONE, YOU MIGHT SAY I'VE KIND OF...*LOST MY WAY*.

THIS IS A PICTURE OF US DURING THE *GOOD OLD DAYS*!

WHY... THAT'S BARNEY *SHEPARD*!

Y-YOU... *KNEW* HIM?!

KNEW HIM? WHY, HE'S SITTING RIGHT OVER *THERE*!

I SUSPECT AT FIRST THAT IT MUST BE SOME KIND OF CRUEL PRACTICAL JOKE.

AFTER EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED TO ME SINCE I CAME TO THIS ALTERNATE DIMENSION, I'M READY FOR ANYTHING...

...ANYTHING BUT THIS!

B-BARNEY!

IS IT REALLY YOU?

TOMMY?

TOMMY HAINES?

IT'S BEEN SO LONG... I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD!

AND I WAS SURE THAT YOU WERE, BARNEY!

HE'S NOT MY BARNEY, AND I'M NOT HIS TOMMY... WE'RE JUST FAMILIAR ECHOES OF TWO OLD FRIENDS FROM VERY DIFFERENT WORLDS.

BUT SOME THINGS ARE THE SAME EVERYWHERE, AND I KNOW NOW THAT I'VE FOUND MY WAY AGAIN.

YEOW... WHERE'S A GOOD CHIROPRACTOR WHEN YOU NEED ONE?

GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO TOOT MY OWN HORN...

WHEEEEEZE

POP!

FORTUNATELY, I WAS WEARING MY HELMET AT THE TIME OF THE CRASH!

AND IT'S LUCKY FOR HER THAT SHE DIDN'T TRY TO STEP ON MY BLUE-SUEDE SHOES!

THANKS FOR THE "GRACE PERIOD," HONEYCAKES! THE KING IS READY TO TAKE YOU ON NOW!

UHH... BUT NO KICKING BELOW THE BELT, OKAY??

BECAUSE I'VE HAD BAD LUCK RECENTLY WITH WOMEN IN THAT AREA!

RELAX--I WOULDN'T DIRTY MY *HANDS* ON THE LIKES OF YOU!

WARMAKER WILL FINISH YOU OFF WHILE I SEE THESE TWO SAFELY HOME!

HEH-HEH! SURE, GRACE, YOU JUST SKEDADDLE AND I'LL WAIT AROUND FOR YOUR MR. WARMAKER TO PADDLE MY BOTTOM!

WARMAKER... I'D SURE LIKE TO MEET THE GOON WITH THAT NAME!

AHEM!

GUESS WHO?

UH-OH!

FIRST OF ALL, YOU'RE CERTAINLY WELL ARMED!

AND YOU'RE AWFULLY BIG...

...AND GROTESQUELY UGLY...

SO YOU MUST BE...

...SATAN?

YOU'RE CLOSE!

I'M THE GUY WHO'S GONNA SEND YOU STRAIGHT TO HELL!

AW, NOT THE BRICK WALL AGAIN--THIS IS GETTING OLD!

GOLDEN CITY

BLAM BLAM BLAM

OVER THERE! THAT'S *GOT* TO BE HIM!

YES, HIS MYSTICAL AURA IS UNMISTAKABLE! IT'S HOW I KNEW THAT HE SURVIVED THAT *FIRESTORM* BACK IN ARCADIA.

AND IF HE COULD SURVIVE *THAT* ONE...

THIS THING MAY BE INDESTRUCTIBLE, KING TIGER, BUT THE MAN *INSIDE* THAT MASK ISN'T!

GENERAL BLAIRE CONSIDERED GOLDEN CITY THE SUPEREGO OF OUR DIVIDED NATION, SO THAT'S HOW HE'LL *MANIFEST* HIMSELF HERE!

THE SUPEREGO IS THE MOSTLY UNCONSCIOUS PART OF THE PSYCHE THAT CENSORS AND RESTRAINS THE EGO AND IS COMPOSED OF THE EGO IDEAL AND THE *CONSCIENCE*!

AS BLAIRE'S PSYCHIATRIST, THERE'S A CHANCE I CAN GET THROUGH TO HIM HERE AND *APPEAL* TO THAT CONSCIENCE!

IT'S COURAGEOUS OF YOU TO *TRY*, DR. SNIDER!

AND I *DO* BELIEVE THAT SUCH EXAMPLES OF SELF-SACRIFICE TEND TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN OTHERS!

HOW MANY DOES *THIS* MAKE?

ONE FOR EVERY WEEKEND THAT WENCH *SENTENCED* US TO!

GRACE BITES!

WOW! HE MUST'VE HIT A **GAS MAIN**-- I THOUGHT THEY WERE ALL TURNED OFF WHEN THESE PROJECTS WERE CONDEMNED!

THERE'S NO **SIGN** OF HIM!

WELL, HEY, I DIDN'T NEED A **BUILDING** TO FALL ON ME!

HUH?

BUT YOU OBVIOUSLY DO!

NOOOO!

HERE IT IS, KID--THE *POWER CENTER* OF MY EMPIRE!

HOLY COW, BARNEY--YOU REALLY *ARE* A MOGUL!

AND SOON TO BE A *MEGA*-MOGUL! I USED MY POLITICAL CONNECTIONS TO GET THAT ADJACENT HOUSING PROJECT CONDEMNED--AND BOUGHT THE PROPERTY FOR A SONG!

LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE STARTED TEARING IT DOWN *ALREADY*!

WHAT WAS *WRONG* WITH IT?

NOTHING, EXCEPT THAT IT GAVE LOW-INCOME *LOSERS* AN AFFORDABLE AND DECENT PLACE TO LIVE!

THERE'S NO MONEY IN THAT--BUT THERE'LL BE *PLENTY* ROLLING IN FROM THE DEVELOPMENT THAT REPLACES IT, SHEPARD SQUARE!

AND I WANT MY OLD PAL IN ON THE *GROUND FLOOR* WITH ME--AS MY EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AT A STARTING SALARY OF TWO MILLION DOLLARS PER ANNUM!

IT'S THE BRASS RING, KID--BETTER *GRAB* IT!

GOSH, BARNEY, I--WELL--

--WHAT THE HELL, I'M *IN*!

THAT'S GREAT, TOMMY! I KNEW THE MINUTE I *SAW* YOU THAT TODAY WAS MY LUCKY--

HEH-HEH-HEH
GROUND
FLOOR...

GENERAL BLAIRE!

YOU'RE JUST IN TIME, SIDNEY-- I NEED YOUR OPINION!

IS THIS "ME"--OR IS IT JUST TOO NORSE GOD FOR WORDS?

I'M NOT TALKING TO YOU, I'M TALKING TO THE MAN *INSIDE* OF YOU!

WHEN HE FIRST CAME TO ME FOR HELP, I TOLD HIM WE COULD TAKE A *LEAP OF FAITH* TOGETHER!

I'M HERE TO TAKE THAT LEAP *RIGHT NOW!*

SIDNEY, THAT'S JUST--CHOKE!--BEAUTIFUL!

AND YOU'RE RIGHT! SOB DEEP DOWN INSIDE I HAVE BEEN YEARNING TO RECLAIM THAT LOST OPPORTUNITY!

SO LET'S HEAD BACK TO THAT CUH-RAZY VORTEX AND MAKE IT A DOUBLE DIP THIS TIME!

NO, THAT'S *NOT* WHAT I--!

ERK.ERK.ERK.ERK.ERK.ERK!

IT LOOKS LIKE THE INTRUDERS ARE HEADED FOR LEVEL 13!

BETTER LOCK AND LOAD, MEN!

THIS WORKED OUT BETTER THAN I EXPECTED.

I KNEW THOSE GUYS WERE AFTER THE MASK, BUT I NEVER EXPECTED THEM TO BRING ME BACK HERE.

SOMETIMES TO TAKE ONE STEP FORWARD YOU HAVE TO TAKE TWO STEPS BACK!

C'MON, SIDNEY. IT'S NOT LIKE I'M ASKING YOU TO SKINNY DIP!

HE'S CRAZY-- SOMEBODY SH-SHOOT HIM!

REALLY, DOCTOR! IS THAT ANY WAY TO TALK ABOUT YOUR--

URGH! UNNG!

--FAVORITE PATIENT?

I'VE...ALWAYS HAD YOUR BEST INTERESTS AT HEART, GENERAL BLAIRE!

WHY ELSE... WOULD I BE HERE??

DON'T INSULT ME, SIDNEY... I MAY BE A LITTLE UNBALANCED, BUT I'M CAREER MILITARY!

DO YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW WHAT ORDERS THEY GAVE YOU?

THE ARMY NEVER PASSES UP A CHANCE TO ACQUIRE A NEW WEAPON!

IF I WASN'T STANDING ON THIS LEDGE, ONE OF THOSE SOLDIERS WOULD'VE OBEYED THE SHOOT-TO-KILL COMMAND ALREADY!

IT'S FUNNY. LAST TIME I JUMPED BECAUSE I'D LOST HOPE FOR THIS WORLD...

... AND THIS TIME I'M DOING IT BECAUSE I'VE GAINED IT BACK AGAIN!

NO, CHARLIE! YOU DON'T *HAVE* TO DO IT!

THE WORLD *NEEDS* GOOD MEN LIKE YOU!

YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THE ARMY'S ORDERS, OF COURSE--BUT THE *HELL* WITH THEM!

YOU'VE OBVIOUSLY *GROWN* FROM THIS EXPERIENCE--ENOUGH TO REALIZE YOUR OWN VALUE AND STAND UP TO AN UNFEELING CHAIN OF COMMAND!

SO JUST THROW THE DAMNED THING *AWAY*, CHARLIE!

YOU'RE WHAT'S IMPORTANT, *YOU* HAVE THE POWER! *DON'T* DESTROY WHAT'S BEST ABOUT THIS WORLD!

SAVE *YOURSELF*, CHARLIE...AND LET THE DAMNED THING *BURN*!

SUC-KER!

NO!

NOT WHILE THERE'S *BREATH IN MY BODY, SIDNEY!*

LET ME GO, YOU MADMAN!

I CAN STILL GET IT... IF YOU'LL ONLY LET ME GO!

I'LL MAKE YOU LET ME GO!

NO, YOU WON'T, SIDNEY... AND YOU'LL NEVER "GET IT" EITHER!

BUT I FINALLY DO, WHICH IS WHY I'M HANGING ON TO YOU FOR DEAR LIFE!

WE FINALLY TOOK OUR LEAP OF FAITH TOGETHER, SIDNEY!

HAHAHA! YOU MIGHT NOT BE THE BEST SHRINK AROUND...

...BUT YOU SURE MADE A BELIEVER OUT OF ME!

LOOK! WHO'S THAT?

HERE GOES NOTHING!

I'VE NEVER MOVED LIKE THIS BEFORE, BUT IT HELPS TO KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING...

...AND EXACTLY WHAT YOU'LL FACE WHEN YOU GET THERE!

TAKE COVER, EVERYBODY--HE'S GOING FOR A BELLY FLOP!

I'D LIKE TO SEE THAT BIG WIMP SHAMU TRY THIS!

SbLAP

POWER

Y DANGEROUS

LOOK WHAT I'M DOING, BARNEY-- PRETTY *CRAZY*, HUH?

EVEN TRIPPED THE *ALARM* BEFORE I TOOK IT OUT!

THIS IS THE *POLICE!* COME OUT WITH YOUR *HANDS UP!* WE HAVE YOU *COMPLETELY SURROUNDED!*

HOLD YOUR HORSES, ROBBIE! I'LL BE OUT IN A *MINUTE!*

HEY, ROBBIE, I THINK IT'S THE SAME GUY AS *BEFORE!*

HMMM... 2B? OR *NOT* 2B?

2D

4D

2D

GUESS THIS ANSWERS *THAT* QUESTION, HUH, BARNEY?

IN MORE WAYS THAN *ONE!*

GIVE YOURSELF *UP!* THERE'S NO OTHER WAY *OUT!*

I'VE *ALREADY* GIVEN MYSELF UP, ROBBIE...

...AND *THIS* IS THE OTHER WAY OUT!

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

SOUTHERN DISCOMFORT

script
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PAT BROSSEAU

title illustration
KYLE HOTZ WITH JAMES SINCLAIR

NEW ORLEANS, THE FRENCH QUARTER, ANOTHER DAY OF MARDI GRAS HAS COME TO AN END--

Court of

--ALMOST!

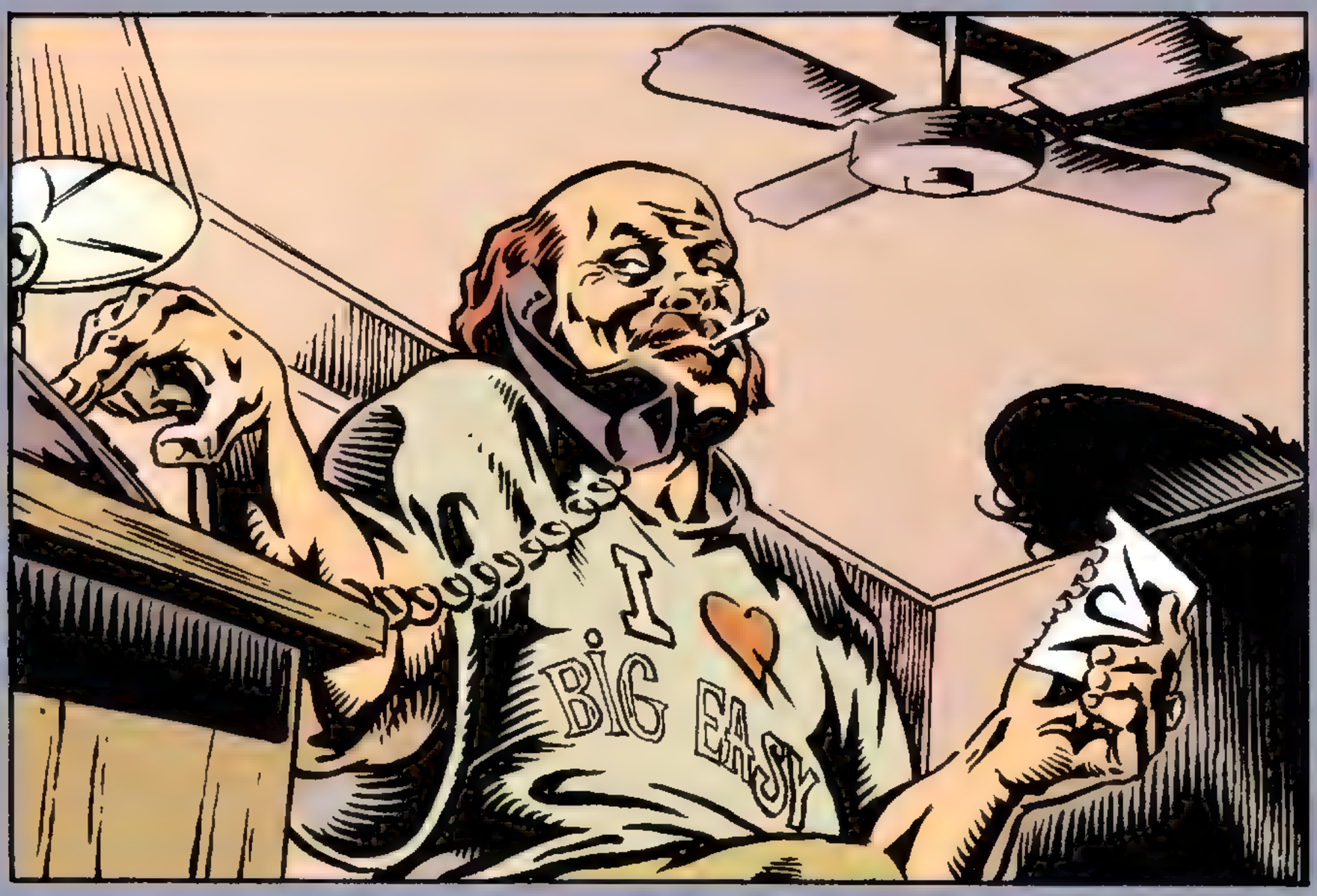
VROOOM!

URRT!

HOTEL

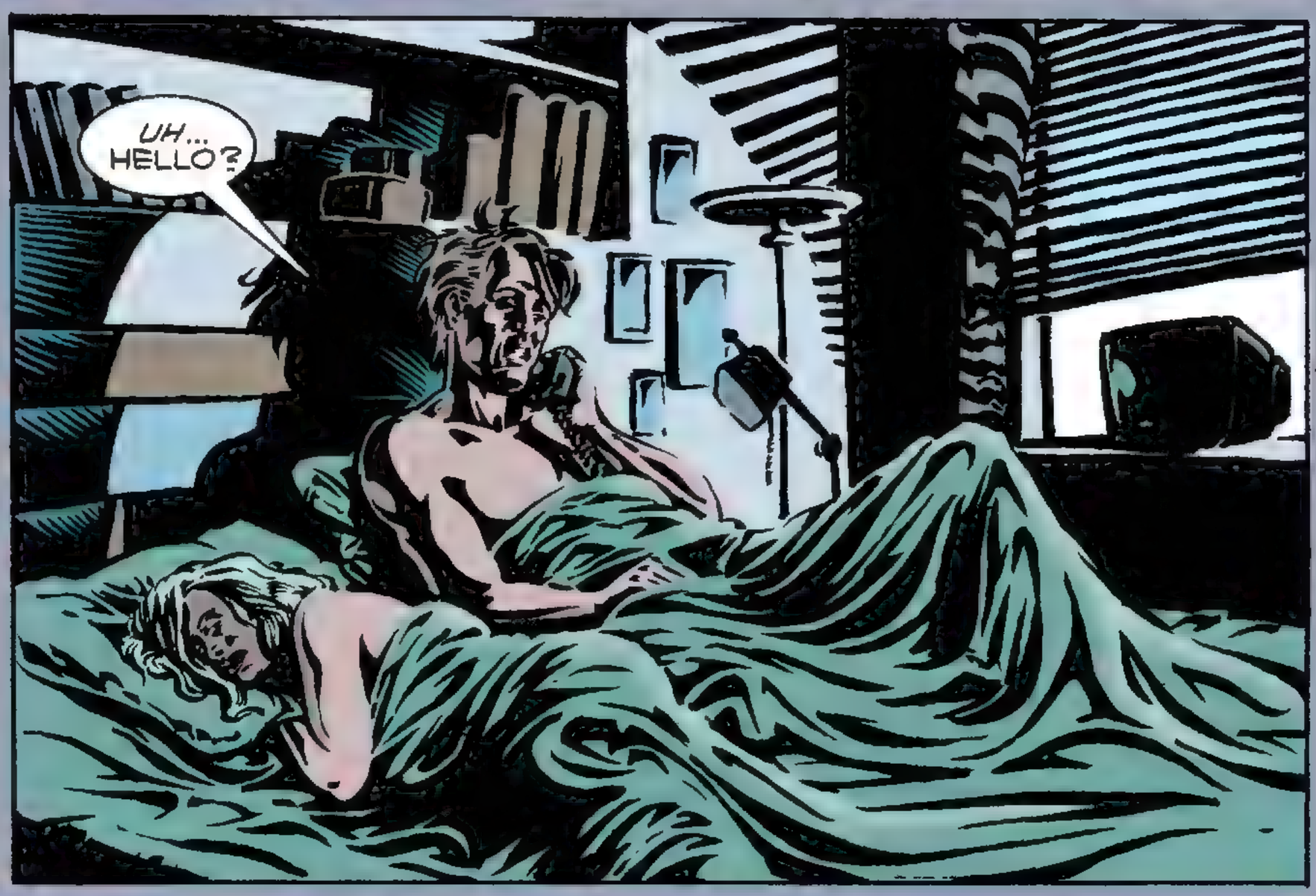
Blanc

189


I ♥ BIG EASY

BRRING!
BRRING!

BRR..


UH... HELLO?

MR. MARTIN, LEO DURN HERE. I BELIEVE I'VE LOCATED YOUR SISTER, JILL. SHE'S HERE IN NEW ORLEANS.

THAT'S *TERRIFIC!* IS SHE *OKAY?*

ACTUALLY, SHE MAY BE IN *TROUBLE.*

MR. MARTIN, IT SEEMS THAT JILL HAS FALLEN INTO THE *HANDS* OF SOME VERY *DANGEROUS* PEOPLE.

SHUNK

HRAAHH!!!

MR. DURN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
MR. DURN??
MR. DURN?!?
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR *SKULL?!*

YOU DON'T HAVE TO *ALWAYS* BE HER SAVIOR!

WHAT OTHER *CHOICE* DO I HAVE?

ERIC, I'M SORRY-- I KNOW JILL IS YOUR SISTER -- BUT NEW ORLEANS DURING MARDI GRAS WILL BE LIKE "THE GONG SHOW" ON *ACID!!*

LOOK, YOU KNOW HOW THE POLICE HAVE HELPED US *LATELY!* THAT'S WHY I HIRED DURN.

WITH DURN *DEAD* FROM A HEART ATTACK, WE CAN'T *AFFORD* ANOTHER INVESTI-GATOR.

I KNOW THIS IS HARD, PLEASE TRY AND UNDERSTAND.

I'M GOING TO THE BANK, HONEY. IT'S TIME FOR THAT RAINY DAY.

HOURS LATER.

BANK

PATTI'S RIGHT. I'M ALWAYS RUN-NING AFTER MY SISTER.

CASHING IN OUR SAVINGS BONDS WILL *DEPLETE* OUR FUNDS, BUT DURN SAID JILL COULD BE IN TROUBLE.

10 C... 1 D... AHH 2 D -- HERE WE GO!

WHAT THE --?

PATTI MUST HAVE PUT THIS IN HERE!

SHE MUST *UNDERSTAND* MORE THAN I THOUGHT. GREAT IDEA FOR MARDI GRAS!

MEANWHILE...

THIS IS LIEUTENANT KELLAWAY! OPEN UP!

KRAK!

DA-DUN! DA-DUN

DA DA DUN!

KEESHAWAAY!
POP!

KELLAWAY!

UHH... CAPTAIN... I WAS JUST MEDITATING... YOU KNOW -- FOR THAT INNER PEACE.

SAVE YOUR BEAUTY REST FOR STAKE-OUTS!

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME I *FORCED* YOU TO TAKE A VACATION?

DON'T WORRY, BOSS, I FEEL FINE.

I'M ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR THE *BAD GUYS*.

AND *BIG-HEAD!*

A SWAMP ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF NEW ORLEANS.

THE CARDS SPEAK OF DEATH.

DEATH WILL COME LIKE A *RAGING* THUNDER-STORM.

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*? TELL ME MORE, GRANDMOTHER.

I BELIEVE THIS CARD REPRESENTS THE GANG LORD *PAPA CROC* WHO HAS ALREADY CAUSED US MUCH *PAIN* AND *DESTRUCTION*.

THE DEVIL

DEATH

I SENSE SOMEONE *NEW* WHO MAY BE AN EVEN MORE *POWERFUL*, SOMEWHAT *UNPREDICTABLE* FORCE.

THE FOOL

DEVIL

DEATH

SOMEONE WHO CAN CAUSE GREAT HAVOC.

FINDING JILL HERE WILL BE LIKE LOOKING FOR A NEEDLE IN A PSYCHEDELIC HAYSTACK!

I NEED TO STAY *POSITIVE*. JILL'S HERE SOMEWHERE --I CAN FEEL IT!

I'LL FIND YOU, JILL, I PROMISE.

YOU AND PATTI ARE THE ONLY FAMILY I HAVE.

MOM AND DAD DIED IN A CAR ACCIDENT WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG.

IT WAS THEN THAT I FELT RESPONSIBLE FOR JILL, TO TAKE CARE OF HER... TO PROTECT HER.

IT PAINS ME TO REMEMBER HOW RECENTLY A RIFT GREW BETWEEN US.

ERIC, YOU'RE DRIVING ME *CRAZY!!*

YOU'RE ALWAYS *MEDDLING* IN MY LIFE! I CAN TAKE CARE OF MY OWN PROBLEMS -- *WITHOUT YOU!!*

I'M JUST TRYING TO LOOK *OUT* FOR YOU! I *AM* YOUR BIG BROTHER!

WELL, IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, I'M NOT SO *LITTLE* ANYMORE!!

I WAS REALLY ANGRY WHEN SHE MOVED DOWN HERE TO LOUISIANA TO ATTEND COLLEGE. I GUESS SHE REALLY NEEDED HER SPACE.

WE BARELY KEPT IN TOUCH, AND WHEN WE DID, IT USUALLY ENDED IN AN ARGUMENT. I ONLY FOUND OUT SHE DISAPPEARED WHEN THE COLLEGE CONTACTED ME.

SINCE SHE PROBABLY DOESN'T WANT TO SEE MY FACE, THIS MASK WILL MAKE A GOOD DISGUISE.

THIS IS THE TACKIEST COSTUME I'VE EVER SEEN! I LOVE IT!

YABBA-DABBA-DO!! THIS LOOKS LIKE MY KINDA' TOWN! TIME TO PARTY!! P-A-R-T-Y! WHY? BECAUSE I WANT TO!

OOPS! I ALMOST FORGOT ABOUT LITTLE MS. JILLIE!

BINGO! I'LL JUST HAVE TO MIX BUSINESS WITH...

"...PLEASURE!"

WHA DAT?

WHERE'S WALDO?

I MEAN... WHERE'S JILL?

COW
0,2%
MILK
1 litre

MISSING

JILL MARTIN

SPLOSH!

HEY, GREENY! THIS SUD'S FOR YOU!

OH, SO IT'S REFRESHMENT TIME--HUH, KIDS?

GIMME A "J"!

GIMME AN "I"!

GIMME AN "L"!

GIMME A...A...

OBSOIVE! NOTHING UP MY SLEEVE EXCEPT A FIRE HOSE!

GEEZ. I HOPE NOBODY HERE IS LACTOSE INTOLERANT!

PUNK

GIDDY UP, CALCIUM!

MILK DOES A BODY GOOD!

YEEE HAA!

SIEZE 'EM!

YIKES!

4 4 4 4

PLUNK!

URRRP!

A PERFECT LANDING, IF I SAY SO!

AND I DO!

10

LUCKY I HAD TH'S TO BREAK MY FALL!!

ACME WHOOPEE CUSHION

DANTE RISTAURANTE

FOOD HOTTER THAN HELL

HOT DIGGITY DOG--ULCER FOOD! ALL THIS SEARCHIN' FOR J'ILL HAS GIVEN ME A RAGIN' CAJUN APPETITE!!

OH, MON-SEWER, TABLE FOR ONE!

DANTE RESTAURANT

SUH, DO YOU HAVE A *RESERVATION*?

HECK NO! IN FACT, I DON'T HAVE ANY KIND OF RESERVATIONS WHATSOEVER!

SLURP!

CHOMP!

CHOMP!

THAT GUMBO-GOO WASN'T SO HOT!

I'VE HAD SPICIER ICE CUBES!

I SHALL NOW PREPARE MY INFAMOUS DUCK A'LA OCTANE!

LA GASOLINE

GULP!

GLUB! GLUB! GLUB!

LA GASOLINE

AHH-- NOW THAT HIT THE SPOT!

UH-OH...

RRRUMBLE

RUUUUMBLE

FWOOSH!

WATER!!

WATER!!

FOOD HOTEL

CLUB!
CLUB!
CLUB!
CLUB!

BLERRRGHH!!!

HEY, YOU, HOLD IT!

NYAH! NYAH! CATCH ME IF YOU CAN!

OPEN SEZ-A ME!!

THIS IS ONE SMALL STEP FOR MASK-KIND...

...AND ONE GIANT LEAP OF PLAUSI-BILITY!

2% MILK

BEN

KA-BLEWWIEE!!

HOW WE GONNA WRITE *THIS* UP?

YEAH, CAPTAIN, I'VE DECIDED TO TAKE A VACATION LEAVE AFTER ALL.

I THINK I'M GOING SOMEWHERE WARM.

SOMEWHERE DOWN SOUTH.

MARDI GRAS HAS ATTRACTED MORE THAN THE USUAL ODDITY, AS IT SEEMS BIG-HEAD HAS COME TO THE BIG EASY.

PIZZA

MACKO BOA

PICKING UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF...

THE PLEASURE CHEST

"ALL RIGHT, EVERYBODY, ALL YUH WILDEST WISHES ARE ABOUT TO COME TRUE!!"

HERE SHE IS TA LIGHT UP YA NIGHT!

DAT STELLAR STRIPPER FROM ABOVE...

...MISS DIXIE STARR!!

DS

THAT'S MINE!

SHE LOVES ME!!

HEY, BABE -- LESH SEE WUT'S UNDER YER MASK!

HOLD ON TO YOUR EYEBALLS, BOYS -- THE SHOW IS JUST STARTIN'!

ZZZIP!

HEY, FELLAS-- WAIT! WAIT!!

HAS ANYONE SEEN THIS GIRL?

WAS IT SOMETHING I SAID?

OOPS! I THOUGHT IT FELT A LITTLE TOO DRAFTY!

"YOU CAN'T HELP BUT *ADMIRE* CROCODILES. THEY'RE ONE OF NATURE'S MOST *PERFECT* PREDATORS.

"THEIR JAWS ARE ADAPTED FOR *SEIZING* AND *CRUSHING* THEIR PREY..."

AND THEIR *LARGE* THROATS ENABLE THEM TO SWALLOW *LARGE* OBJECTS.

KINDA LIKE *YOUR* SIZE.

SHOOT, PAPA! YOU TELL *ALL* YOUR DINNER GUESTS DIS STUFF?

NO, EDDY, ONLY WHEN THE GUESTS *ARE* DINNER!

YOU *CRAZY* MAN!!

SNAP!

AAAHH! MY ARM!!!

DOUBLE-DEALING BEHIND MY BACK! SKIMMING DRUG PROFITS! DID YOU *ACTUALLY* BELIEVE PAPA WOULDN'T FIND OUT??

YOUR DISRESPECT *PAINS* ME, EDDY. I CANNOT *AFFORD* TO *TOLERATE* SUCH BEHAVIOR IN MY ORGANIZATION. YOU ARE A SEED FOR CAUSING DISSENSION.

A SEED I MUST *CRUSH!*

UUUH!

OGOUN, TAKE EDDY FOR A *WALK.*

WHAT THE HELL...

PAPA, DON'T!! PLEASE! I'LL GO AWAY, I'LL DISAPPEAR!

I KNOW YOU WILL -- BON APPETIT!!

SPLOOSH!

WE'VE HAD A *BUSY* WEEK SO FAR -- FIRST WITH DETECTIVE DURN AND NOW -- AHH, MY DINNER!

MMMM -- THANK YOU, DARLIN'!

THAT'LL BE ALL FOR NOW, DARLIN'. WAIT FOR ME IN-SIDE.

I WILL MISS THIS ONE, OGOUN -- BUT THEN AGAIN -- I MISS THEM *ALL!*

"TOMORROW, THE MOON WILL BE **FULL**, AND THE SPIRITS WILL **CRY** FOR THE SPILLING OF HER **BLOOD** IN THEIR NAME..."

CASINO

CASINO

MEANWHILE, ON A RIVERBOAT CASINO FLOATING JUST OFF THE SHORE OF NEW ORLEANS.

GENTLEMEN, I FOLD.

WELL, SIR, IT APPEARS THAT IT'S NOW BETWEEN *YOU* AND *ME*.

FULL HOUSE! TRY *BEATIN'* THAT!!

FRANKLY, *SUH*, I DON'T GIVE A *DAMN*! I HAVE A...

...ROYAL FLUSH!!

WOWSERS! THAT WAS FUN! LET'S TRY SOME OTHER GAMES!

SLAM!

HOW 'BOUT OLD MAID!?

OR-- GO FISH!

OR HIC GIN RUMMY!

SAY, SINCE I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, HAVE ANY OF YOU SEEN THIS GIRL?

OOOPSY!

I MEAN THIS GIRL!!

WELL, DO ANY OF THESE GIRLS RING A BELL?

WHAT THE *HELL*--THAT'S *ME* AND MY *MISTRESS!!* WHERE'D YOU GET *THAT* PICTURE!?!?

WAHOOWAHOO!

AFTER HIM!!

SO LONG, POKER PALS! IT'S BEEN A BLAST!!

THEY LIKE ME!! THEY REALLY LIKE ME!!

KA-BOOM!

YOU KNOW, JOE, I COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE THAT YOUR MISTRESS IS MY *WIFE!!*

NEXT MORNING.

UHHH...

WOW, LAST NIGHT MUST HAVE BEEN A DREAM... OR AM I LOSING MY MIND?

MAYBE I'M UNDER MORE STRESS THAN I THOUGHT... PERHAPS I OVER-HEATED WHEN I PUT THE MASK ON AND BLACKED OUT! BUT IT SEEMED SO...

...REAL!!

WITH THIS MASK, I CAN DO ANY-THING...

"...STARTING WITH FIXING THIS HOLE!"

HOLD YER HORSES, TOOTS! MASK AT WORK!

DO NOT DISTURB

SLAM

DO NOT DISTURB

BANG! BANG! BRRR! CLANK HONK! POP! MOOO! PLOP! SNAP! CRACKLE! POP!

YOU CAN SKIP THIS ROOM.

DO NOT DISTURB

BOY, THIS MASK GIVES ME GREAT *POWER!* IT COULD BE MY *TICKET* TO FINDING JILL!

BUT FIRST, I'LL *CHECK* WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR ANY LEADS.

LATER THAT AFTERNOON.

TO BE HONEST, LT. KELLAWAY, RIGHT NOW I HAVE MORE *PRESSIN'* MATTERS TO DEAL WITH BESIDES DIS *BIG-HEAD* FELLA!

CPT. DUPREE

AS MUCH AS WE *LUV* A GOOD TIME, DIS DEPART-MENT HAS ITS HANDS FULL KEEPIN' THE *POT* FROM *BOILIN'* OVER DURIN' *MARDI GRAS!*

CAPTAIN DUPREE, PLEASE DO NOT *UNDER-ESTIMATE* BIG-HEAD!! HE'S NOT YOUR AVERAGE *MADMAN!*

TRUST ME--HE HAS THE *POTENTIAL* TO CAUSE SERIOUS *DAMAGE!*

I TRULY APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN, LIEUTENANT, BUT DON'T YOU WORRY NONE. DOWN HERE, WE KNOW HOW TO *HANDLE* TROUBLE-MAKIN' YANKEES-- EVEN ONE WITH A GREEN *HEAD* 'N' ALL.

BACK-WATER *FOOLS!* THEY HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY'RE UP AGAINST!

SLAM!

I'LL JUST HAVE TO *SCOPE* OUT THE STREETS ON MY OWN. HE COULD TURN UP *ANYWHERE*, SO I'LL JUST HAVE TO STAY ON MY TOES!

I'M SORRY, MR. MARTIN...

...I CAN'T FIND *ANY* MENTION OF SOMEONE FITTING YOUR SISTER'S DESCRIPTION IN OUR RECORDS.

OKAY, THANKS FOR CHECKING.

MR. MARTIN, HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF CHECKING THE DOWN-TOWN YOUTH SHELTER? THEY *SEE* QUITE A FEW *RUNAWAYS* PASS THROUGH THEIR DOOR.

GOOD IDEA! I *WILL!*

YOUTH SHELTER

THANKS, KEEP THE CHANGE.

TAXI

HEY, BOYS -- CHECK IT OUT!

NICE JACKET -- I CAN *SMELL* THAT LEATHER FROM HERE!

YEAH! WELL, I SMELL *MONEY!!*

NO, I DON'T RECALL SEEING THIS GIRL.

HAVE YOU TRIED ASKING ANY OF THE OTHER STAFF MEMBERS?

YEAH -- EVEN SOME OF THE KIDS. SO FAR I'M *BATTING ZERO!*

PLEASE KEEP THE PHOTO. MY *NAME* AND *NUMBER* ARE ON THE BACK IN CASE YOU *HEAR* ANYTHING.

HEY, MISTA-- HEAR YA LOOKIN' FOR A *GIRL*.

HER NAME *JILL*, RIGHT?

YES!! WHAT DO YOU *KNOW* ??

I KNOW YOU PRETTY *GULLIBLE!*

GO AHEAD *RUN*, MAN!!

"DIS ALLEY IS A *DEAD END!!*

"YOU AIN'T GOIN' *NOWHERES!*"

HEY, WHERE DID HE GO?!

UUUH-- DO YOU THINK HE'S IN THAT CAN?

YOU CHECK IT OUT!!

SINCE YOU CAN'T TAKE A HINT--

--LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN TAKE A HIT!!

LET'S BEAT IT!!

HMMM... A SEVEN-TEN SPLIT! A TRICKY SHOT!!

GOOD THING I'M FULL A' TRICKS!

MOVE OR VOME

SMACK

BLAM

OH, $*%&¢!!

RUMMBLE!!

SPLAT!

DIS STUFF TASTES SWEET--LIKE SUGAH!!

CLOSE, BOYS! ACTUALLY--IT'S MOLASSES, YOU ASSES!

YUP, SUGAR AT ITS WORST!

MOLASSES + BEES = FUN FOR ME!!

KILLER BEES

WAIT! WHAT AM I DOING?

SCREEECH!

THIS IS GETTING WAY OUT OF CONTROL. I FEEL LIKE THIS MASK IS PLAYING PING-PONG WITH MY HEAD!

FOR JILL'S SAKE, I HAVE TO FOCUS, GET BACK ON TRACK.

INSTEAD OF WASTING MY TIME WITH THESE THUGS, I SHOULD BE DOING SOME...

...DETECTIVE WORK!!

OKAY, POOCHES...

SCRITCH SCRATCH

SNIFF!

SNIFF!

...GET A SNOUT FULL!

WEEEEEEF!

WOOF! WOOF!

DIXIE BAR
AH-- TONIGHT'S A *BUST.*
THE ONLY THING I'LL GET OUT OF TODAY IS A *HANGOVER!*
MIGHT AS WELL *HIT* THE *SACK.* TOMORROW I'LL KEEP *LOOKING* FOR...
BIG-HEAD! HEY, IT'S BIG-HEAD!!
'SCUSE ME! COMIN' THROUGH-- POLICE!
GOTCHA!!

DON'T SHOOT! DON'T SHOOT !!

LOOK, I'M SORRY-- DON'T WORRY. I'M A...

FREEZE! PUT DOWN YOUR WEAPON NOW!

NAME'S KELLAWAY-- I'M A COP TOO! LET ME SHOW YOU MY BADGE.

YA KNOW, MAYBE THE BADGE FAIRY TOOK YOUR BADGE!

WOOF!

TELL ME, PARTNER, WHY IS IT ON NIGHTS LIKE THIS, WITH A FULL MOON, IT SEEMS ALL THE CRAZIES COME OUT?!

O GREAT SPIRITS OF DARKNESS...

...WE OFFER THIS LIFE AS A *SYMBOL* OF OUR DEVOTION TO YOUR GREAT *POWER!*

MAY THIS KNIFE *RELEASE* HER *BLOOD* TO *DRINK* AND HER *SOUL* TO *DEVOUR!!*

THUMP!

THUD!

CUT! CUT!!

SOMEBODY *FIX* THIS!! I WANT US READY TO *ROLL* IN 5 MINUTES!

AHH, OGOUN, MY FRIEND-- WE'VE *OUTDONE* OURSELVES THIS *TIME!*

VOODOO SACRIFICE PART IS WILL BE OUR *BEST* SNUFF FILM YET!!

WE SHOULD WRAP TONIGHT, BARRING ANY FURTHER *IN-TERRUPTIONS!*

WOOF! WOOF!

FOUND SOMETHING, MY TRUSTY MASK-HOUNDS?

SCREEEEEEK!

YEOWW!

WOOSH!

CRASH!

UHH... WHERE AM I?

HEY-- LOOKS LIKE I STUMBLED INTO "AMERICA'S KINKIEST HOME VIDEOS"! MMM-- CHECK OUT THE BABE... SHE'S...

...YIKES-- JILL!

I BETTER DO SOMETHING PRONTO, OR SHE'S GONNA END UP AS SUSHI!!

...MAY THIS KNIFE *RELEASE* HER *BLOOD*--

SKRAASH!

MIND IF I CUT IN??

OKAY, EVERY-BODY--GET YOUR POLYESTER OUT OF MOTHBALLS-- IT'S TIME TO--

"--GET DOWN ON IT"!!

FFFFT!!

SNFF-- BLOWFISH POISON! GEE, I HOPE I'M NOT ALLERGIC TO THIS STUFF!
YEEOOW!
POP!
SHOOSH!
SWOOSH!
WHAM

JEEPERS CREEPERS! WHERE'D YOU GET THOSE PEEPERS!

THAT WAS A GAS-- LET'S DO IT AGAIN!

ON GUARD!! BE PREPARED TO MEET YOUR MACKEREL!!

OGOUN-- FINISH HIM! LET'S GO!!

HEADS, YOU WIN!

SHUNK!

TAILS! YOU LOSE!!

THWAP!

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN??

PHOO!

COUGH! COUGH! GAG!

SKLUNK!

AAAHH!

Mom

OKAY, MR. CLEAN, I'M GONNA WIPE THAT SHINE OFF YOUR HEAD!

BUKSHH!

THUD!

SMOKIN'!!

YIKES!! I BETTER SAVE JILL, OR THE NEXT MOVIE SHE'S IN WILL BE MY SISTER, THE BLISTER!

BAH! OUR SNUFF FILM IS NOW A *DISASTER*, BUT AT LEAST THAT *NUT* WILL BE *FRIED!*

AS THEY SAY--"BE PREPARED"!

DON'T WORRY, JILL, WE'RE *CUTTIN'* OUTTA HERE!!

SPLOOSH!!

HEY, JILL, SNAP OUT OF IT!!

RISE AND SHINE!!

Ding! Ding!

JILL... IT'S ME...

...ERIC!! WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH YOU?!

PLEASE, SOMEBODY HELP!!

HOSP ITAL

I'M SORRY, MR. MARTIN, I'VE NEVER ENCOUNTERED SOMEONE IN YOUR SISTER'S CONDITION BEFORE. SHE'S TOTALLY UNRESPONSIVE. I CAN ONLY SUGGEST KEEPING HER HERE FOR FURTHER TESTS AND OBSERVATION.

IF YOU THINK SO, DOC.

GOOD MORNIN', SUGAH.

YOU KNOW, I'M ALSO A LAWYER.

UH... THANKS, I'LL KEEP IT IN MIND.

WOW, I HAVEN'T FELT THIS *HUNG-OVER* SINCE THE LAST POLICE CONVENTION!

...SO, DA WORD ON DA STREET IS BIG-HEAD'S MOVIN' IN ON PAPA CROC'S TURF!

SEEMS LAST NIGHT, BIG-HEAD *RAIDED* ONE A' CROC'S WAREHOUSE GIGS! *BURNT* IT TO THE GROUND!

DIS BIG-HEAD *CRAZY* MESSIN' WIT A BIG MAN LIKE *CROC!*

WHAT A *BREAK!* SOUNDS LIKE WHO-EVER POSSESSES THE *MASK* IS GUNNING AFTER THIS *PAPA CROC.*

SEEMS LIKE CROC *RULES* THE ROOST OF THE ORLEANS *UNDERWORLD.* WHICH MEANS...

LISTEN UP, PEOPLE, I'M LOOKING FOR A KELLAWAY!

THAT'S ME.

"COME ALONG! CAPT. DUPREE WANTS TO SEE YOU!"

HERE'S YOUR *BADGE*-- YOU'RE *LUCKY* THE BARTENDER IS A FRIEND.

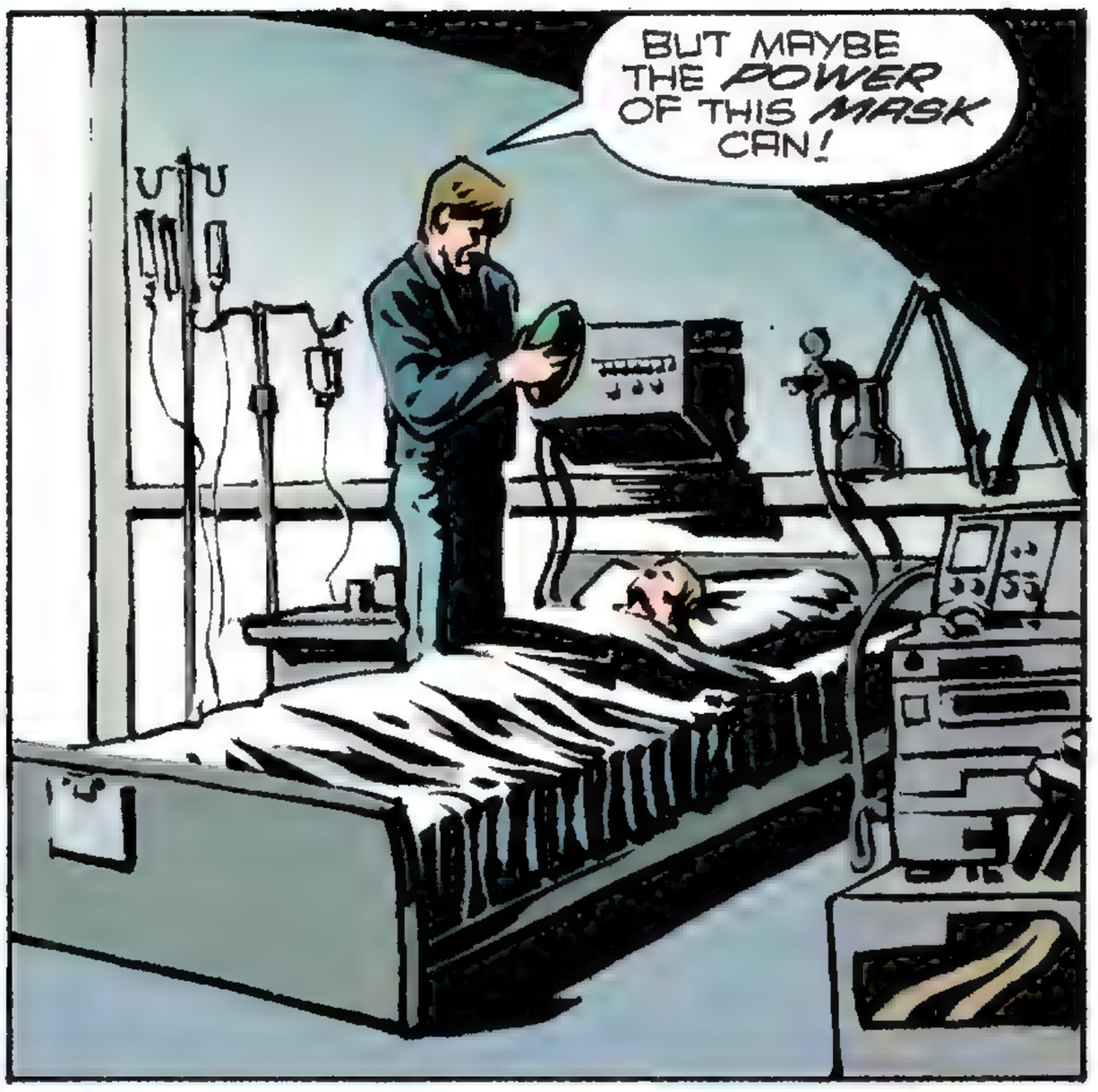
LIEUTENANT, SEEIN' THAT YOU ARE A *FELLOW* OFFICAH AND A *GUEST* IN OUR FAIR CITY, I *FEEL* THAT IT IS ONLY *PROPAH* THAT I *CUT* YOU SOME SLACK AND NOT *PRESS* ANY CHARGES.

BUT, LIEUTENANT, I *WARN* YOU, NEXT TIME I *WON'T* BE SO *GENEROUS!* I SUGGEST THE ONLY *HOT WATER* YOU FIND YOURSELF IN-- BE A *SHOWER!*

THANKS, CAPTAIN. I'M HEADING FOR MY HOTEL.

BUT NOT BEFORE I *CHECK* YOUR RECORDS FOR THE ADDRESS OF THIS *PAPA CROC.*

NEW ORLEANS HOSPITAL
JILL, NOW THAT I'VE FOUND YOU, I CAN'T EVEN REACH YOU.


BUT MAYBE THE POWER OF THIS MASK CAN!

ERIC, NO!!

THAT MASK WON'T HELP HER!
YOU! YOU'RE THE DOCTOR FROM THE SHELTER!

ACTUALLY, I WORK HERE AND VOLUNTEER AT THE YOUTH SHELTER. MY NAME IS JASMINE.
IT SEEMS FATE HAS BROUGHT US TOGETHER AGAIN.

I'M HERE TO *HELP*. YOUR SISTER'S *CONDITION* CANNOT BE *CURED* BY EITHER CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE OR *THAT* MASK.

MASK? WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*?

THERE'S NO NEED TO *PRETEND*, ERIC. I SENSED SOMETHING *ODD* ABOUT YOU WHEN WE FIRST *MET* AT THE SHELTER.

NOW, I *REALIZE* I MUST HAVE BEEN *PICKING UP* THE MASK'S *AURA*.

*"AFTER YOU LEFT, I **HEARD** NOISES OUTSIDE MY OFFICE WINDOW. **LOOKING** OUT, I **WITNESSED** YOUR **TRANSFORMATION!**"*

LOOK, *LATELY* I'VE BEEN ON A *ROLLER COASTER* OF *WEIRDNESS!* ALL I WANT TO DO IS HELP MY *SISTER!*

I KNOW, SO *PLEASE* TRUST ME, ERIC. THE *FORCES* AT WORK HERE ARE *DARK* AND *POWERFUL*. TO *OVERCOME* THEM, WE *MUST* FIRST SEEK *COUNSEL*...

*"...MY GRANDMOTHER, **BELLA**."*

YES, IT WAS *WISE* OF MY GRANDDAUGHTER TO *BRING* YOU HERE. I BELIEVE, FROM WHAT YOU'VE *TOLD* ME, THAT YOUR SISTER'S UNDER A *VOODOO* SPELL.

A *SPELL* CAST BY *PAPA CROC*. THE MAN YOU MENTIONED IN THE *WARE-HOUSE*.

ARE YOU *TELLING* ME JILL'S SOME KIND OF *ZOMBIE*?

NO, ZOMBIES ARE THE *DEAD* BROUGHT *BACK*. YOUR SISTER, *JILL*, STILL *LIVES!* ALTHOUGH HER *BODY* IS A *HOLLOW* SHELL!

HER *SOUL* OR *ESSENCE* HAS BEEN *SIPHONED* OUT AND *PLACED* INTO A STONE JAR BY *PAPA CROC* DURING AN ANCIENT AND *FORBIDDEN* VOODOO *RITUAL*.

AS LONG AS CROC *POSSESSES* HER TRAPPED *SOUL*, SHE WILL BE *FROZEN* IN LIMBO AS WELL AS HIS *SLAVE!*

I'LL JUST *HAVE* TO *PAY* THIS PAPA CROC A *VISIT!*

NOT SO *QUICK*, ERIC! DON'T *UN-DERESTIMATE* PAPA CROC; HE'S TRULY *EVIL!*

HE'S *TWISTED* THE *POWER* OF VOODOO TO SERVE HIS OWN *WARPED* CAUSE!!

CROC WAS A *VICIOUS* AND *CRUEL* GENERAL FROM HAITI, WHERE IN HIS *LUST* FOR POWER HE *RAPED* AND *RAVAGED* THE PEOPLE.

EVENTUALLY, HE WAS *OVER-THROWN*, SO HE *FLED* HERE, TO NEW ORLEANS, WHERE HE MET *OGOUN*, A VOODOO HIT MAN.

EVIL ATTRACTS *EVIL*, SO IT WAS *INEVITABLE* THAT THESE TWO *SERPENTS* WOULD ONE DAY *INTER-TWINE*.

TOGETHER, THEIR *VENOM* HAS *POISONED* THIS CITY TO ITS *CORE*.

THE MOST *VILE* AND *HEINOUS* OF THEIR *ACTS* IS THE *ABDUCTION* OF YOUNG WOMEN, SUCH AS YOUR SISTER.

THESE WOMEN-- THEY *STEAL* THEIR *SOULS* AS *OFFERINGS* TO THE DARK FORCES AND *SACRIFICE* THEIR *BODIES* IN THEIR *DEMENTED* FILMS TO HELP *FINANCE* THEIR *WRETCHED* UNDERWORLD *EMPIRE!!*

GRANDMOTHER!

LATER...

IS SHE OKAY?

YES, SHE'S *RESTING* NOW.

MY GRANDMOTHER TAKES *VOODOO* SERIOUSLY, AND WHEN IT'S *ABUSED*, IT UPSETS HER *DEEPLY*.

AT HER *AGE*, IT'S GETTING *HARDER* TO HANDLE.

NO WONDER, THIS VOODOO *STUFF* CAN GET PRETTY *NASTY*!!

ACTUALLY, VOODOO IS *REALLY* A FORCE FOR *GOOD*, ERIC. MY GRANDMOTHER HAS *TAUGHT* ME TO USE IT AS IT *SHOULD*--TO *HELP* AND TO *HEAL*!

WELL, *HE* MAY NOT *KNOW* IT-- BUT IT'S *TIME* THAT PAPA CROC WAS *OVERTHROWN* AGAIN!

BE *CAREFUL*, ERIC!!

ALTHOUGH IT'S OUR BEST *WEAPON*, I SENSE THE MASK'S *POWER* IS *TAINTED*. DON'T LET ITS *DARK* SIDE *CONSUME* YOU!

I'M *WILLING* TO TAKE ANY *RISK* TO *SAVE* JILL!

"WHAT A SPREAD!!"

AND *KNOWING* HOW THE *MASK* WORKS, IT'S ONLY A *MATTER* OF *TIME* BEFORE...

"...HE SHOWS UP LOOKING FOR CROC!"

TARGET SIGHTED!!

BATTLE STATION!!

FWOOOSH!

FIRE ONE!!

MAN, GUARD DUTY STINKS!!

NOTHIN' EVER HAPPENS!

WHACK!!

NOW TO CHANGE INTO SOMETHING MORE APPROPRIATE FOR...

...BREAKING AND ENTERING!

WHO DECORATED THIS PLACE--CROCODILE DUMB-DEE?!

"AH, OGOUN! IT APPEARS WE HAVE A VISITOR!"

APPARENTLY, THE GREEN-HEADED NUT LIVES!!

LET US GIVE HIM A PROPER WELCOME!!

JILL MARTIN.

JILL, RISE.

GET DRESSED. JILL, IT'S TIME TO COME BACK!

HOSPITAL

I *HATE* STAKE-OUTS!

MY NECK IS *KILLING* ME, AND I'M ALMOST OUT OF *SMOKES!*

BLAM BLAM BLAM

GUNSHOTS-- FROM CROC'S PLACE!!

"BIG-HEAD! HE'S HERE!"

BEFORE I GO *IN*, I BETTER CALL FOR *BACKUP!*

BLAM! BLAM!

BLAM!

BLAM! BLAM!

GEEZ! SOME PEOPLE JUST DON'T APPRECIATE HIGH CULTURE!!

GET HIM, YOU MORONS!!

IDIOTS! OGOUN, GET OUT THERE...

...NOW!

NOW FOR MY GRAND FINALE-- THE PIROUETTE OF DOOM!

AH!

OOF!

UNGH!

TRA-LA-LA-BOOM-DE-AY, I SWEEP BAD GUYS AWAY, I PUNCH THEM IN THE GUTS, I KICK THEM IN THE N--

--WOA! WOA!! WOOAAA!!!

URK!

SPLASH!

GULP!! THOSE THINGS LOOK HUNGRY!

THIS WILL BE ALL THE RAGE IN PARIS, AND IT'S GUARANTEED NOT TO SHRINK!

HEY, IT'S CHROME-DOME, JUST THE DUDE I'M LOOKING FOR!!

HAND OVER MY SISTER JILL'S SOUL BEFORE I PUMP YOU FULL OF LEAD!!

OH, BOY-- NOW YOU'RE IN BIG TROUBLE!! I'M GONNA SUE YOU FOR COPY-RIGHT INFRINGE-MENT!! NO DEAL. NO DOLLS!

AHHHH!

HIII-YAAH!! GET READY TO TASTE MY BLADE!

THOK!

HA HA HA HA

MEANWHILE...

THIS PLACE HAS BEEN AS EASY TO GET INTO AS FORT KNOX!

LOOKS LIKE THIS MAY BE MY LUCKY BREAK!

MADE IT! NOW TO FIND BIG-HEAD AND HELP THE POOR SLOB UNDER THAT MASK.

THUNK!

GEEZ, AND I THOUGHT TWISTER WAS TOUGH!

OKAY, HOCKEY PUCK, I'M SICK OF PLAYING DOLLIE-- I WANT MY SISTER JILL'S SOUL... NOW!

IT *SEEMS*, MY DEAR, THAT I'M *NOT* THE ONLY ONE *INTERESTED* IN GETTING YOU *BACK!*

BUT, YOU'RE *PAPA'S* GIRL-- *BODY* AND ...

...SOUL!!

SOMEBODY TURN OFF THE HEAT-- I'M BURNIN' UP!!

WHAT THE...

SOMEHOW THIS *GOON* IS HOLDING *BIG-HEAD* AT *BAY!* WHAT'S *THAT* IN HIS *HAND?*

A *MASK* VOODOO DOLL!?!

THAT *DOLL* MAY BE MY *WAY* OF FINALLY *CONTROLLING* THE *MASK!*

SNAP!

UHH! I THINK IT'S TIME YOU GUYS TRIED WEIGHT WATCHERS!

FELLAS, FELLAS! NOT SO ROUGH! I BRUISE LIKE A GRAPE!

WELL, THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME I'VE MADE AN ASH OUT OF MYSELF!

THIS IS CRAZY... COULD THIS REALLY BE THE END OF BIG-HEAD?

BOOHOO! JUST MAKE SURE MY ASHES ARE STREWN OVER THE SUN-TROPIC BIKINI TEAM!

YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY: TWO HEADACHES ARE BETTER THAN ONE!!

THIS DOESN'T LOOK GOOD!

BUT THIS LOOKS WORSE!!

LET'S CUT AND RUN--AND YOU'RE COMING WITH ME, JILL! I STILL HAVE FUTURE PLANS FOR YOU!!

TSK, TSK! WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU WERE IN FOR A CHECK-UP?

UH-OH! SOMEBODY HASN'T BEEN FLOSSING! LOOKS LIKE TH'S BIG GOLD ONE HAS TO GO!

GRUNT! UMPH!

THUD!

I THINK I KNOW WHAT HE'LL BE WANTING FOR CHRISTMAS!

VROOOM!

HEY-- CHUBBY'S ON THE LAM!

HOLY SMOKES-- HE HAS JILL!!

HA! I'VE SEEN THE LAST OF THAT GREEN-HEADED MANIAC!

IT'S BEEN AWHILE-- CROC-O-DILE!!

ALL RIGHT--NO MORE MR. WISE-GUY! HAND OVER MY SISTER AND HER SOUL!

BONK!

TAKE IT -- YOU PEST!!

SPPITTOOO! AND I ALWAYS THOUGHT SWAMP WATER WAS SUPPOSED TO TASTE GOOD!

UUHH...

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

OH, SH--

CAPT. DUPREE!

NICE *DUDS!* IS *THAT* THE NEW *S.W.A.T.* UNIFORM?

YOU'RE *LUCKY* I DIDN'T LET HIM *CUT* YOU IN *TWO!* YOU *OWE* ME!!

THIS IS THE *FIRST* TIME IN *FIFTEEN* YEARS I MISSED *MARCHING* WITH MY CREW IN THE *MARDI GRAS* PARADE!!

NO PULSE. HE'S *DEAD*, CAPTAIN!

OKAY, KELLAWAY-- YOU *CALL* ME ALL THE WAY *OUT* HERE-- *WHERE'S* THIS *BIG-HEAD?*

THAT'S WHAT *I'D* LIKE TO *KNOW!*

UHH-AHHH-UHH-AHHH-UHHHH...

WHAT THE *HELL* IS *THAT!?!?!*

ME Tarzan, YOU LAME!

MAN OVERBOARD!! HERE, CATCH THIS!

SPLOOSH

LATER, ALLIGATOR!!

I'LL *GET* YOU, *FREAK*!

I'LL *SEE* TO IT THAT *YOU* AND YOUR *SISTER* ARE *GROUND* INTO...

...DOG MEAT!

HOURS LATER, NEAR DAWN.

ERIC, IT IS *DONE*.

BELLA HAS FINISHED THE RITUAL. *JILL* AND HER *SOUL* ARE ONE AGAIN!

ABOUT TIME!! I'VE BEEN TURNING GREEN WAITING!!

ERIC-- YOU... YOU'RE STILL *WEARING* THE *MASK*!

THAT'S RIGHT! I'LL MAKE *SURE* NOTHING EVER HARMS JILL AGAIN!

I'LL CRUSH ANYONE WHO TRIES TO HURT HER!!

I'LL... I'LL BUILD A FORTRESS AND KEEP HER INSIDE--SAFE FOREVER!

YOU MEAN A *PRISONER*!

ERIC, STOP THIS -- OR YOU'LL BE NO BETTER THAN PAPA CROC IN CONTROLLING YOUR SISTER!

YOU NEED TO LET GO OF JILL -- AND THE MASK!

YOU'RE RIGHT!

JILL'S WAITING -- GO AND SEE HER.

AFTER ALMOST A YEAR OF SEARCHING, ERIC FINDS NO WORDS TO EXPRESS HIS JOY AT SEEING HIS SISTER WHOLE AGAIN.

THE MASK MAY HAVE BROUGHT SOME OF HIS DARKER SIDES, BUT IT WAS WORTH IT... WORTH EVERY DAY TO HAVE THIS MOMENT.

A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER...

KEEPING THIS MASK ANY LONGER MAY NOT BE SUCH A GOOD IDEA. I'LL FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO WITH IT ONCE I GET HOME.

LATER, AT THE NEW ORLEANS AIRPORT.

SOME VACATION-- NOW I FEEL LIKE I REALLY NEED ONE!

GOOD-BYE, JILL. I LOVE YOU.

GOOD-BYE, ERIC-- I LOVE YOU TOO!

DARK

JILL, YOU KNOW YOU CAN STILL COME WITH ME! DON'T WORRY-- I WON'T...

ERIC... RELAX. REMEMBER OUR TALK--THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP, BUT I'M GOING TO BE OKAY!

I'M NOT ALONE. I'VE MADE A GOOD FRIEND!

I GUESS WE ALL HAVE!!

BACK IN SAN DIEGO.

ERIC!!

PATTI!!

SORRY I'M *LATE*--

--I GOT *STUCK* IN *TRAFFIC!*

BOY, I *MISSED* YOU, *HON*. HAVE I *GOT* A *STORY* TO *TELL* YOU!

I'M JUST SO *GLAD* THAT...

"...IT'S OVER!!"

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN* THE *BODY* IS *MISSING* -!?!?

IT'S LIKE I SAID, DUPREE, THAT BIG, *BALD* GUY--YOU KNOW, THE *ONE* WITH THAT FUNNY *TATTOO* ON HIS *FACE!*

AND THE *STRANGEST* THING IS THAT IT *APPEARS* TO HAVE BEEN *RIPPED OPEN* FROM THE *INSIDE!!*

FIN

NIGHT OF THE RETURN OF THE LIVING IPKISS . . . KINDA

script
JOHN ARCUDI

art
DOUG MAHNKE

colors
CHRIS CHALENOR

lettering
CLEM ROBINS

title illustration
DOUG MAHNKE

OH, STANLEY. I'M SORRY I HAD TO KILL YOU.

BUT ALL THIS *MASK* TROUBLE, YOU STARTED IT. NOW IT'LL NEVER END.

STANLEY IPKISS

STANLEY IPKISS

CHUFF

NIGHT OF THE RETURN OF THE LIVING IPKISS ...kinda

HOLY #@!%! I MUST BE SEEIN' THINGS!

REALLY? WELL, I HAVE A SURE-FIRE CURE FOR THAT!

BAM

BRAAAAP

SEE ANYTHING NOW?!!

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SQUIRM YOUR WAY OUTTA THIS ONE, MOZZO. YOU'RE A LIFER FOR SURE.

YEAH, RIGHT. WALTER AND I WILL BE BACK ON THE STREETS BEFORE YOU ARE.

Police

HEY, THERE, KELLAWAY! HOW'S IT HANGING?

GOOD GRAVY! IS THAT IPKISS?!

IN THE FLESHLESS, FLATFOOT!

IZZAT A TATTOO, OR DO YOLI DRAW IT ON EVERY MORNING?

KILL HIM!

BOOM

TA POK

TA TA

BLAM

RAT

TATATA

TA TA

Oh, PLEASE.

BRAAAAAAAD

HAVE WE LEARNED NOTHING?!?

BRAAAAAAAD

LIONEL, DUCK!

SAY, I DIDN'T KNOW REFRIGERATORS COULD BLEED.

uhhhhh, DO YOU MIND?

FINE. HAVE IT YOUR WAY!

POP!

YOU AREN'T TAKING ME WITHOUT A FIGHT, MAGGOT-MOUTH!

TOK

SONNY, I DON'T EVEN WANT YOU.

JUST KELLAWAY-- AND THAT KATHY BITCH!!!

AW, WHAT THE HELL?!

CHUNK

DAMN! I CAN'T BELIEVE I BROKE MY ARM AGAIN!

THE PITCH...

STEE-RIKE!

GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE, WARN KATHY...

HERE'S THE WIND-UP...

SHA-BOOM

LET'S GO, KATHY! EVERY-BODY'S WAITIN' FER YA--IN HELL!!!

OH, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, STANLEY, WOULD YOU STOP! YOU DON'T EVEN *HAVE* THE *MASK* ANYMORE!

I--I DON'T?

DANG.

POOF

FWUMP

NO! LOTS OF PEOPLE HAVE HAD IT SINCE YOU DID. IF YOU HADN'T BEEN DEAD ALL THIS TIME, YOU'D KNOW THAT.

JEEZ!! THE NERVE OF THAT GUY!

JEEZ, THAT WAS CLOSE, eh?

JEEZ, I REALLY THOUGHT I WAS DEAD THERE FOR A SECOND.

YO, WALTER!

HEADS UP!

HOLD ON THERE, PAL.

WE'VE GOT A MESS TO CLEAN UP.

ALL RIGHT, COME ON, FOLKS. LET'S MOVE ALONG.

NOTHING TO SEE HERE.

the End

TOYS IN THE ATTIC

script
BOB FINGERMAN

pencils
SIBIN

inks
BERNARD KOLLE

colors
PAMELA RAMBO

lettering
ANNIE PARKHOUSE

title illustration
DOUG MAHNKE WITH PAMELA RAMBO
AND DARK HORSE DIGITAL

THE MASK™

TOYS IN THE ATTICK

Grepco

GOOD AFTERNOON, MR. GREPINI.

WHAT WOULD *YOU* KNOW ABOUT IT? GOOD? ...*PAH!*

KRASKER, WHERE IN BLAZES *ARE* YOU?!? DON'T MAKE ME COME *LOOKING* FOR YOU, *ALOO*, I'M *NOT* IN THE MOOD FOR A SPIRITED GAME OF *HIDE 'N' SEEK*--A GAME *INVENTED* BY OLD MAN *GREPINI*, MIGHT I ADD!

I'M OVER HERE, MR. GREPINI.

OUR *STOCKS* ARE *PLUMMETING*, KRASKER. THE STOCKHOLDERS ARE BEGINNING TO *PANIC*. BY GOD, I'VE DONE *EVERYTHING* I CAN THINK OF TO MAKE THEM HAPPY. I'VE *DOWNSIZED*, I'VE *OUT-SOURCED*, I'VE CUT BACK ON *BENEFITS*, *401-Ks*... *EVERYTHING*.

HELL, KRASKER, *YOU'RE* MY *R+D* DEPARTMENT... COME UP WITH A *SUCCESSFUL* TOY LINE, OR IT'S *YOUR* ASS. I NEED SOMETHING BY *MONDAY*.

HAVE A GOOD WEEKEND.

GREP

THIS IS JUST *PERFECT*. WHAT A GREAT WAY TO START THE WEEKEND: JUST *CANCEL* IT AT THE ONSET.

Worst thing this company ever did was go *public*... grumble ...mutter... gripe...

THIS DEPARTMENT HAS WINNOWED AWAY PERSON BY PERSON, BUT MY *SALARY* STAYS THE SAME. "*YOU'RE* MY R+D DEPARTMENT..." *GRIEF*, AM I *EVER*. I'M THE *SOLE* SURVIVOR.

WITH ALL THE *OTHERS* IN THE SECTION *GONE*, ALL I'VE GOT FOR COMPANY IS *MYSELF*. AND I'M PRETTY *POOR* COMPANY.

GREPINI EXPECTS ME TO COME UP WITH THE ANSWER TO *ALL* HIS PROBLEMS AND WASTE MY *WEEKEND* DOING IT. *SCREW* HIM *AND* HIS COMPANY. I HOPE THEY *DO* GO BELLY UP. LEAST *THEN* I COULD COLLECT *UNEMPLOYMENT* FOR A WHILE.

HEY, *MISTER*, NEED SOME *TOYS*? YOU GOT *KIDS*? NEED SOME *TOYS*?

AH, A YOUNG *ENTREPRENEUR*. HMM, LEMME SEE WHAT YOU'VE GOT HERE.

STOOP SALE
JUST COS I DON'T WANNIT NO MORE DON'T MEAN YOU WON'T

GRANMA'S TIKI JUNK

THIS LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEEN WELL PLAYED WITH.

AH, THAT'S A PIECE OF *CRAP*.

GUESS I WON'T BOTHER TELLING THE LITTLE BASTARD IT'S ONE OF *MY* DESIGNS.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH *THIS BOX*?

GRANMA'S TIKI JUNK

AH, THAT'S MY *DEAD* GRAN'MA'S *JUNK*. YOU *WANNIT*, NAME YER PRICE.

HMMM, THIS STUFF IS INTERESTING. *SAAAAY*, WHAT'S THIS?

THIS IS QUITE AN ODD PIECE.

HEY, IF A TOY LINE CAME OUT BASED ON ALL THIS STUFF, LIKE SAY, SOMETHING CALLED "*TIKI TOWN*," WOULD *YOU* BUY IT?

HELL NO. DO I LOOK LIKE A *RETARD* OR SOMETHING?

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE *REPRESENTATIVE* OF YOUR GENERATION?

HUH?

ARE YOU AN *AVERAGE* KID?

ABSOLUTELY.

What a chump, sucker, idiot.

INTRODUCING GREPINI'S NEW *ENTERPRISE-SINKING, CHAPTER 11-CAUSING* TOY-LINE. HEH-HEH-HEH.

♪ EVERYBODY'S *WORKING* FOR THE *WEEKEND*... ♫

OH, YES, GREPINI, I'LL HAVE A NEW LINE FOR YOU ON MONDAY MORNING. ONE THAT'LL SINK YOUR BATTLESHIP... PERMANENTLY.

JUNK, JUNK, GARBAGE, JUNK... HUH?

BASTARDS! WHEN WILL THEY LET ME *ALONE*? HOW MANY *YEARS* HAVE TO *PASS*, *DAMN* THEM?

Class of '80
Bardard
Thesp Club
Anniversary
Party

Too bad you can't make it, Aldo. Club members **ONLY**

Ha!!

HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO GET IN THE HEAD OF CREATING A TOY LINE KIDS'LL *HATE* IF I'M IN SUCH A *FUNK*? WHY MUST THOSE *SADISTS* KEEP RUBBING MY NOSE IN THE *PAST*?

SO *WHAT* IF I WAS A *BAD ACTOR*? SO IT WASN'T *MY* CALLING! *BIG DEAL!*

=*URP*= *DAMN* THOSE *CHEAP* TV DINNERS.

*%@A3IN' *GREPIN'* AND THOSE *THESP CLUB* JERKS... MUMBLE...

WHAT *TH'--??*

WHAT *LIGHT* THROUGH YONDER WINDOW BREAKS?

'TIS NO LIGHT, BUT THAT *TALENTLESS* CLOD, *ALDO KRASKER*, DOING WHAT *HE* DOES BEST.

YEAH, SITTING ON HIS *EVER-WIDENING BOTTOM*, DOING HIS IMITATION OF A *LARGE-MOUTHED BASS*.

ALDO, HERE, WOULD RAH-THER WATCH *MOVIES* THAN PARTAKE OF *LIVE THEATER!*

HOW *NAU-SEATINGLY* PEDESTRIAN.

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT IN HERE, BUT THIS IS *TOO* MUCH. I TOLERATED *YEARS* OF ABUSE AND... AND...

SORRY, ALDO OLD BOY, BUT YOUR ABILITY TO *PROJECT* YOUR *VOICE* IS SO UTTERLY *NONEXISTENT*, I COULDN'T HEAR YOU!

HOW CAN YOU *STAND* TO BE YOURSELF, ALDO? ALWAYS PLAYING WITH YOUR LITTLE *TOYS*. HOW COULD YOU *EVER* HAVE EVEN *HOPED* TO BE A GREAT ACTOR? YOU'RE *BARELY* CONVINCING AS A *PLEBEIAN*.

HAHAHAHAHAHA!

PRITHY, SIRRAHS, AND ALL MANNERS OF GESTICULATING SHAKESPEAREAN BUFFOONS! I AM THE MASKED CRITIC, AND I AM HERE TO REVIEW YOUR PERFORMANCES!

WHO ARE *YOU* TO--

GOOD LORD, WHO--?

TUT, TUT, TUT... NONE OF THAT. THERE'LL BE PLENTY OF TIME TO THANK ME LATER, SON! NOW, LOOKY HERE. I--

SEE HERE, KRASKER, THIS IS NO TIME FOR IDLE DILLY-DALLYING! YOU'VE GOT WORK TO DO! SAVE MY COMPANY, YOU LAZY, LITTLE GOOD-FOR-NOTHING!

BUT I...

EX-CUSE ME, BUT WAS I SAYING SOMETHING OVER HERE?!?

NO MORE INTERRUPTIONS, PUH-LEEEZE!

GEEZ, KREPLACH, PICK A THEME FOR THIS NIGHTMARE, WOULDJA? EITHER THE HIGH-SCHOOL TORMENTORS CLUB, OR JOB-RELATED STRESS, BUT NOT BOTH! I'M NO GOOD AT MULTI-TASKING!!!

I... YOU... IT--

LEMME GUESS, KRESKLER... IN THEATER CLUB YOU WEREN'T MUCH FOR AD LIBS, WERE YOU?

MY NAME IS KRASKER! WHO THE DEVIL ARE YOU?!?

[GASP] IT SPEAKS! IN A SENTENCE, YET.

THEY CALLS ME MR TIBBS... NO, WAIT, THAT ISN'T RIGHT. MR PIBS IS OUT, TOO. HANG ON, I'LL GET IT. SOME FOLKS CALL ME BIG HEAD, BUT THAT ISN'T VERY NICE. GIMME A MINUTE, CHAMP, I'LL COME UP WITH A CATCHY MONIKER.

SEEMS YOU HAVE A LOT OF STRESS. AM I RIGHT, HONEY?

IT'S OK, YOU CAN TELL NANA. YOU CAN TALK TO ME, ICKLE, WICKLE BOOFER'S BUBBA.

SAY, WHAT'S WITH THE BABY TALK.

YOU'RE RIGHT, KRASKY, OL' PAL.

BLAAAAAARRRRRRGH!

SEEMS TO ME, KRASKY, THAT YOU COULD USE A LITTLE BOOST TO YOUR EGO. YOU AND ME SHOULD GET BETTER ACQUAINTED. YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF DEMONS TO EXORCISE. I CAN HELP YOU PURGE THEM! =URPS=

AS YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED, I'M REAL GOOD AT PURGING.

KRASKER, THE ANSWER TO YOUR PROBLEMS IS IN YOUR HANDS... IN YOUR HANDS...

...IN YOUR HANDS...

...IN YOUR HANDS...

WOW!

EARLY MORNING...

AND SO BEGINS ANOTHER *PERFECT* WEEKEND IN *CHARM CITY.*

WELL, YOU GOTTA HAND IT TO THIS *CLOWN*, SAM, HE'S *ORIGINAL*. I MEAN, I AIN'T SEEN *NOTHIN'* LIKE *THIS* BEFORE. *YOU?* I MEAN, HOW MUCH *WORK* YOU GOTTA PUT IN TO DO ALL *THIS?* IT'D BE MUCH EASIER YOU WANTED SOMEONE DEAD TO JUST GO *BANG!* *THIS?* A *LOTTA* EFFORT.

YES. YES. WAY TA GO, PARTNER. IF YOU NEED SOMEONE TO STATE AND RESTATE THE *OBVIOUS*, *MITCH PETRILLO* IS YOUR MAN. OF *COURSE* IT WOULD BE EASIER TO JUST PUT A CAP IN SOMEBODY...

HOW MAD YOU GOTTA **BE** AT SOMEONE TO GO TO THE BOTHER OF **NAILING** HIM TO THE WALL? AND **POSING** HIM, NO LESS. IT DON'T MAKE SENSE.

WHAT **ARE** THOSE THINGS HOLDING THE BODY UP THERE? THEY LOOK LIKE **DUMBBELLS.** GOTTEN ENOUGH PICTURES? DUSTED FOR PRINTS? CAN WE GET UP THERE AND START POKING AROUND?

I'VE GONE OVER THE STIFF, SO YOU CAN YANK IT DOWN. I'D LIKE A BETTER LOOK AT THE **LAB** ANYHOW. I'VE GOT NO HEAD FOR **HEIGHTS**, SO THE SOONER HE'S **OFF** THE **WALL** AND **ON** MY **SLAB**, THE BETTER.

WHAT'S THE **PROBLEM**, GUYS? HURRY IT UP.

LISTEN, **LT. DUKE**, THIS GUY IS UP HERE BUT **GOOD**. THE PERP BANGED **THREE-POUND HAND WEIGHTS** INTO THIS GUY. HE'S **CRUCIFIED** WITH **HAND WEIGHTS!**

THIS IS ONE **STRONG** INDIVIDUAL WE'RE LOOKING FOR. IF IT **IS** AN INDIVIDUAL. MIGHT'VE BEEN A **GROUP**, SOMETHING **THIS** LABOR INTENSIVE. BUT WHO IS THIS **BODY BEAUTIFUL?** WHAT'D HE **DO** TO DESERVE **THIS?**

ONE...TWO...

...THREEEAAUGH!!!

YIPES!

GANG WAY!

=GROAN= I CAN'T **BELIEVE** I SLEPT IN THE **CHAIR** ALL NIGHT. **URRGH**, I FEEL LIKE HELL. THIS ISN'T RIGHT. JOB **MALAISE**, THE ONSET OF HOLIDAY SEASONAL DEPRESSION. AND NOW I'VE GOTTA GET TO **WORK** ON OLD MAN GREPINI'S NEW TOY LINE.

THAT STUPID SONG SAYS, "EVERYBODY'S WORKING **FOR** THE WEEKEND," NOT **THROUGH** THE WEEKEND.

HELLO, PARTNER IN **CRIME**. SHALL WE SET TO WORK ON GREPINI'S **SHIP-SINKER** OF A TOY LINE? I'VE GOTTA STAY **FROSTY** IF I'M GOING TO DELIVER THE GOODS ON MONDAY MORN.

OKAY, SO THE FIRST THING I'VE GOTTA DO IS DESIGN SOME ACTION FIGURES. THEN ENDLESS EXPENSIVE SETS OF ACCESSORIES. THEN PLAY SETS, HALLOWEEN COSTUMES, VEHICLES, ETC.

AN **ENDLESS** PROCESSION OF MERCHANDISE, ALL BY MONDAY. AT LEAST ENOUGH TO SET THE WHEELS ROLLING. THEN THE CON JOB. THE SNAPPY PATTER I'LL NEED TO SELL GREPINI ON THIS WHOLE BALL OF WAX.

IT'S FUNNY, THOUGH. I DON'T REALLY **BLAME** GREPINI FOR ANYTHING. AS THE SAYING GOES, "THIS IS **BUSINESS**." SURE FIRING EVERYONE BUT ME WAS A LOUSY THING, BUT BUSINESS IS LOUSY, TOO.

MAYBE I'M JUST HELPING HIM OUT, REALLY. I SHOULD STOP THINKING SO SPITEFULLY. GREPINI ISN'T REALLY SO BAD...

...YEAH, **RIGHT.**

SO WHERE'S A GUY GOTTA GO TO GET HAND WEIGHTS *SHARPENED* INTO *SPIKES*, HUH? IS THERE AN *ALL-NIGHT DUMBBELL SHARPENING SERVICE* IN TOWN I'VE OVERLOOKED?

WHAT'S *MORE* INEXPLICABLE IS THE FACT THAT THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY DENTS IN THE *BLUNT* END.

WHAT HAMMERED THEM THROUGH HIS *BODY* AND INTO A *CINDER-BLOCK WALL*?

SO HERE'S THE *SKINNY*: THE VIC IS *NICK HOPPER*, 34, INVESTMENT BANKER. LIVED HERE FOR FOUR YEARS, WORKED OUT AT THE SAME GYM FOR THAT PERIOD OF TIME. NO ROMANTIC ENTANGLEMENTS WE CAN DETERMINE AT THIS TIME.

SO WHAT'RE *YOU* ALL SMILES ABOUT? THIS IS *FUNNY* TO YOU?

FAIR ENOUGH.

OKAY, *THAT'S GOOD!* CLEAR THE ROOM. DUKE AND I GOTTA SPEND SOME *QUALITY TIME* ALONE, SO PACK IT *UP* AND MOVE IT *OUT!* CHOP, CHOP!

WHAT? YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT TO CONCENTRATE ON THIS WE NEED THEM OUT OF HERE. AM I RIGHT?

HEY, NO OFFENSE SIR, BUT THIS IS *NERVES*, OKAY? I'M SMILING 'CAUSE IT'S *SPOOKY*, A' RIGHT? MAYBE *YOU'RE* USED TO SEEIN' 200-POUND *FITNESS FREAKS* HUNG OVER THE MANTLE LIKE A *TROPHY*...

"QUALITY TIME ALONE," THOUGH? *WHATEVER*. LET'S DO THIS THING.

I AM GETTING MIGHTY *TIRED* OF ALL THIS *QUALITY TIME ALONE!* I'VE GONE THROUGH TWO BOXES OF PENCILS AND HALF A REAM OF PAPER AND I'VE GOT *NOTHING* TO SHOW FOR IT BUT *HAND CRAMP* AND *BACKACHE!*

IT'S *YOUR* FAULT. HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO *CONCENTRATE* ON MY WORK LOOKING AT *YOU? TAUNTING* ME. *TEASING* ME.

WELL, NERTS TO YOU, YOU EXCLUSIONARY SCUMBAGS!

SO I WASN'T MUCH OF AN ACTOR, BUT MY STAGE MINIATURES WERE GREAT! HOW MANY OF YOU WENT ON TO BIGGER AND BETTER?

HOW PETTY TO SEND ME A NON-INVITE! YOU CURS! MY VORPAL BLADE WOULD GO SNICKER-SNACK GIVEN HALF THE OPPORTUNITY!

"ALAS! POOR YORICK. I KNEW HIM, HORATIO; A FELLOW OF INFINITE JEST, OF MOST EXCELLENT FANCY..."

PROBABLY MORE THAN ANY OF YOU ELITIST CRETINS COULD RECITE FROM MEMORY! PAH!

"ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE, AND ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN MERELY PLAYERS..."

WHOOOPS!

BUT TO SWITCH GEARS FROM SHAKY TO WILLIAM CONGREVE, "NO MASK LIKE OPEN TRUTH TO COVER LIES, AS TO GO NAKED IS THE BEST DISGUISE."

WHOO-WHOO! BOY THOSE POETRY-SCRIBBLING HOTTIES HAD DIRTY MINDS! WHOO!

SO, THEN, NAKED IT IS!

BRRRRR! THIS ISN'T EXACTLY NAKED SEASON! MAYBE I SHOULD RETHINK THIS PLAN OF ATTACK!

AND COME TO THINK OF IT--WHICH I DO AT THIS MOMENT--I'M SIX STORIES UP!

YIKES!

SO, OFF TO GREET AND MEET--OR SHOULD I SAY GRATE AND MEAT?--ANOTHER OF MY TORMENTORS! OFF TO THE RACES! ZOOT-ZOOT!

SO, WHAT DO YOU HAVE, DEDINI?

WELL, THIS JUST GETS ICKIER AND ICKIER.

DON'T GET ALL TECHNICAL ON US, DOC. DEFINE YOUR TERMS.

OUR KILLER HAS A *VERY* SICK SENSE OF HUMOR. I MEAN, FURTHER THAN HIS METHOD OF DISPENSING WITH MR. HOPPER HERE, HE ALSO HAD HOPPER WEAR A NONE-TOO-DIGNIFIED PIECE OF *APPAREL*.

WHAT *IS* THAT? IT LOOKS LIKE A...

IT'S A *DIAPER*, ALL RIGHTY. AND IT WAS PLENTY *FULL*. I ASSURE YOU.

BUT I DON'T THINK THE KILLER WAS SAFEGUARDING HOPPER'S JOG TOGS, FOR HIS *OR* OUR SAKES.

I THINK THE DIAPERS WERE PUT ON HIM TO *HUMILIATE* HIM FURTHER.

OKAY. SO WE KNOW THAT HOPPER WAS A VAIN MOFO WHO TOOK PHYSICAL FITNESS *VERY* SERIOUSLY. WHAT'S HIS BACKGROUND?

EXERCISE, FITNESS, RUNNING, JOGGING, DIAPERS, CRUCIFIED, HIGH FINANCE

GREW UP MIDDLE CLASS, WENT TO LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM K THROUGH *6TH*. THEN HE WENT TO A PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOL, *BARDARD*, THEN ON TO *WESTBROOK* FOR A BUSINESS DEGREE. HE INTERNED RIGHT OUT OF SCHOOL AT *WEBBER AND SCHLITITSKI*, STAYING ON THERE WHERE HE MOVED UP TO FULL-FLEDGED BANKER.

THAT'S IT FOR MILESTONES. NOW WE HAVE TO DIG *DEEPER*.

SCOODLE-DEE-OOT-DOOT-BEEDEN-BOP...

HEY, *WEIRDO*, IT'S LIKE *FREEZING* OUT AND YOU'RE DRESSED FOR SUMMER. YOU *HIGH*? YOU BACK FROM VACATION AND STILL *HIGH*? I CAN MAKE YOU *HIGHER*. I CAN PUT YOU RIGHT INTO *HEAVEN*.

NOW ISN'T THAT *CONSIDERATE* OF YOU? ARE WE DISCUSSING *THEOLOGY* HERE? WELL, SEE, I'VE GOT THIS APPOINTMENT UPTOWN AND I CAN'T AFFORD ANY DELAYS, CAPITO?

I AIN'T IN TH' MOOD FOR COMEDY JOKES, IDIOT. NOW GIMME ALL YOUR DOUGH AND I'LL LET YOU LIVE.

AHEM...

GNNAAAAAGH!!!

CHOMP!!!

YOWIEEEE! MY FINGERS! YOU BIT OFF MY FREAKIN' FINGERS!

RATA TAT ATAT TAT TAT

WHAT'RE YOU BELLYACHING ABOUT? I GAVE 'EM BACK TO YOU, YA INGRATE!

CAN I PLAY THIS HAND THROUGH OR AM I GOING TO HAVE TO CHEAT? OH, WHAT'S THE *FUN* OF CHEATING IF NO ONE KNOWS YOU'RE DOING IT? MAYBE I SHOULD'VE INVITED SOMEONE OVER TONIGHT.

VOILA! INSTANT PARTY! HOW'S ABOUT A NICE HAND OF BRIDGE?

YEAH, MAH MAN! I BROUGHT ALONG THESE TWO FINE FOXES! SEXY LADIES!

Hi, MARE...

GAAAAGH!!! A NIGHTMARE!

SEE WHAT YOU DID? SEE WHAT YOU DID? SHE SAID "Hi, MARE" NOT "NIGHTMARE!" YOU'VE GONE AND UPSET MY FINE FOXY FRIENDS!

OH, MISTER GRAAAANNNNT! BOO-HOO-HOO!

UCCH, I LOOK SO FAT. EATING DISORDERS ARE HILARIOUS! MUNCH! CHEW!

HUAARGH!

SLOOSH

OH, DEAR LORD!!!

ENOUGH OF THIS SIT-COMEDIC CAUCHEMAR--THA'S FRENCH FER NIGHTMARE, B'WAH --WE GOT BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO!

MY GOD, WHAT'S ALL TH-THIS ABOUT?

LOOKITCHOO, B'WAH! MAKIN' A RIGHT SILLY SPECTACLE OF YO'SE'F! IS Y'ALL CRAB-WALKIN' OR BREAK DANCIN'? THA'S WHAT IT'S CALLED, AIN'T IT? BREAK DANCIN'?

YOU ALLUS WAS GOOD AT THE FANCY FOOT WORK, GAVIN BECHER!

Y-YOU KNOW ME? D-DO I KNOW YOU?

DOES Y'ALL KNOW ME?!?

OF COURSE YOU KNOW ME, B'WAH!?!?

YOU THINK I GO AROUND TERRORIZING STRANGERS FOR KICKS? WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE...

...SOME KINDA KOOK?!?

CAREFUL HOW YOU ANSWER THAT, GAVIN, I'M THE SENSITIVE TYPE.

WOULDJA LOOK AT THAT? I STILL HAVEN'T GOTTEN RID OF ALL OF THAT MUGGER'S FINGERS. SHEESH!

BLURRF! WH-WHO ARE YOU? WH-WHAT DO YOU WANT FR-FROM ME?

YES! YES! TO THE POINT ALREADY! GOOD SHOW, OLD BOY!

A GOOD SHOW IS MY POINT! OPENING NIGHT, THE SMELL OF GREASE PAINT IN THE AIR--I'M CONFUSED; IS THAT A GOOD SMELL OR A BAD ONE?

NEVER MIND--AND OFF IN THE WINGS THE EAGER BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE CHORUS WAIT TO PLUNGE ONTO THE STAGE.

THE LIGHTS DIM, FIRST OVER THE GALLERY, THEN THE PARTERRE, FINALLY THE ORCHESTRA SEATS. WITH ALL NOW IN DARKNESS, A HUSH FALLS OVER THE EXPECTANT AUDIENCE. THE CROWD HOLDS ITS BREATH. THEN, THEN...

...THEN BANGO! THE LIGHTS COME UP AND IT'S SHOW TIME! A GLAMOROUS DANCE NUMBER!

CAN YOU BEAT THAT? WELL CAN YOU, MISTER TIPPY-TAP-TOES? MR. JAZZ-HANDS? BALANCHINE THIS, YOU ELITIST RAT! IT'S TIME FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL "SLAUGHTER ON TENTH AVENUE"!!!

NO. NO, I'M AFRAID I COULDN'T. Y-YOU WERE AMAZING.

YOU MEAN YOU LIKE ME? YOU REALLY LIKE ME?

Y-YES. YOU WERE SUPERB.

THEN WHY'D YOU VOTE TO KICK ME OUT OF THE BARDARD THESP CLUB???

ALDO KRASKER! OH... MY... GOD...

BINGO.

THUMP! THUMP! TAPPITY-

I'VE JUST ABOUT *HAD* IT WITH ALL HIS NOISE. IT'S NEARLY *NINE O' CLOCK*. HAS HE NO *DECENCY*?

I SHOULD SAY NOT. CALL THE *CONSTABULARIES*, HERSCHEL.

KKRASH!

THWOMP!

EEEEK!

GO CHECK IT OUT, MILDRED. YOU KNOW I WOULD, BUT MY *GOUT'S* ACTING UP.

AND YOU CALL YOURSELF A *MAN*. ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO, YOU OLD SO-AND-SO...

GAAAAGGGH... URK... HHHHHHH.

OH, MILDRED, MILDRED... I'M SO SORRY, MY ANGEL.

ANGEL IS RIGHT! WHOO-WHOO!

GAAAAGGGH... URK...HHHHHHH.

S'LONG, GAVIN! THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!

AAAA-AAAH-AAiEAAHHAH!

UUUGH. WHAT'D I DO LAST NIGHT TO MAKE ME FEEL THIS HUNG OVER? I SHOULD'VE BEEN WORKING. IT'S SUNDAY AND NOW I'VE GOT TO DO ALL MY SKETCHES IN ONE DAY. I'M AN IMBECILE.

NO SELF-RECRIMINATION, ALDO. YOU'RE UNDER A LOT OF PRESSURE, SO YOU'RE ENTITLED TO GET HAMMERED. THE WORK WILL GET DONE TODAY.

IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'VE GOT ANY CHOICE IN THE MATTER.

YAWN. SOMEBODY'S BEEN BUSY.

WHEN DID I DO ALL *THIS?* I MEAN, THIS IS *GREAT*, BUT WHEN DID I DO IT? LAST NIGHT IS A *TOTAL BLANK.* I MUST'VE WORKED TILL I WAS BLIND AND THEN WENT OUT AND GOT *HAMMERED!*

HOORAY FOR ME, *HOORAY FOR ME!*

"WHO FIRST INVENTED WORK, AND BOUND THE FREE AND HOLIDAY-REJOICING SPIRIT DOWN?"

WELL, *MR. LAMBYKINS*, MY HOLIDAY-REJOICING SPIRITS ARE *WAAAY* UP THIS FINE MORNING! *WHOOP!*

"THESE ARE THE TIMES THAT TRY MEN'S SOULS."

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE TO START BURPING UP *BROMIDES?*

HEY, IT BEATS "*@!# HAPPENS!"

YOU TWO SHOULD TAKE YOUR ACT OUT ON THE ROAD. PUT YOU TWO IN FRONT OF A *BRICK WALL* AND--

AND WHAT, *SHOOT US?*

I WAS GONNA SUGGEST HANDING YOU *MIKES*, BUT AS YOUR IDEA MIGHT GO OVER *BIGGER*...

THIS KILLER OF YOURS IS A REAL *CREATIVE* GUY. THESE SHOTS I TOOK TODAY WERE KIND OF *FUN*, I HATE TO ADMIT.

YOU, SIR, ARE A *MORBID* SONUVABITCH.

YEAH, BENECKI. TAKE YOUR *CAMERA* AND SKEEDADDLE. YOU MAKE ME *NERVOUS.*

SHEESH, A GUY TRIES TO FIND SOMETHING TO ENJOY ABOUT HIS WORK AND HE GETS HIS *HEAD* CUT OFF.

AW, DON'T GET *YOUR* HEAD CUT OFF. THEN *WHO'D* PHOTOGRAPH IT? HEH, HEH.

THE OLD MAN SAID **SHE** DIED FROM A **HEART ATTACK** WHEN SHE OPENED THE CURTAINS. THAT'S RIGHT BEFORE **HE** DIED ON THE WAY DOWN TO THE AMBULANCE.

SO OUR KILLER PICKED UP A COUPLE OF **SPARES.**

CUTE. WE'VE GOT TWO FREAKY HOMICIDES AND YOU'RE MAKING **BOWLING** ANALOGIES.

WHAT CAN I SAY? OUR KILLER'S SENSE OF **WHIMSY** IS CONTAGIOUS.

LET'S HOPE THAT'S **ALL** THAT'S CONTAGIOUS ABOUT HIM.

OKAY, WHAT DO THESE TWO BIZARRE HOMICIDES HAVE IN COMMON... BESIDES THEIR BIZARRENESS?

FIRST THEY'RE BOTH **MALE**, SECOND, THEY'RE BOTH **34 YEARS OLD**, THIRD, THEY'RE BOTH FAIRLY **AFFLUENT**. WHAT'D BECHER DO FOR A LIVING?

HE WAS A **FOOD STYLIST.**

WHAT'S **THAT**?

YOU KNOW HOW FAST FOOD ADS ALWAYS MAKE THE FOOD LOOK, YOU KNOW, **EDIBLE**, EVEN **APPETIZING**? BECHER HERE WAS ONE OF THE ONES **RESPONSIBLE** FOR THAT KIND OF DECEPTION.

SO THE KILLER DID HIM IN 'CAUSE HE WAS TIRED OF EATING **UGLY, FLAT, OVER-COOKED** HAMBURGERS, MAKES SENSE TO ME. LET'S GO HOME.

MITCH, LET'S HOPE THIS **WHIMSY** THING YOU'RE GOING THROUGH IS JUST A **PHASE.**

LIEUTENANTS PETRILLO AND DUKE, I'VE GOT SOME **HOT** INFO FOR YOU!

THEY JUST DECIDED TO RETIRE ME WITH A **TRIPLE PENSION**?

WHIMSY, WHIMSY, WHIMSY...

BETTER, SIR! THE =PANT, PANT= **EMS** GUYS REVIVED THE OLD MAN LONG ENOUGH TO PUMP A LAST BIT OF INFORMATION OUT OF HIM! =GASP=

HE SAID HE SAW THE **KILLER** SWINGING AWAY LIKE **TARZAN** FROM UPSTAIRS!

HE **WHAT**?!? ANY DESCRIPTION?

YEAH, HE SAID HE WAS WEARING A **GREEN MASK** AND A **LOINCLOTH**, THAT'S ALL.

WHAT ELSE?

N-NOTHING ELSE, SIR. THEN THE WITNESS **DIED**, LIKE, FOR **REAL** DEAD. NO BRINGING HIM BACK FOR A **THIRD** TIME. SORRY, SIR.

NO, NO. NOTHING TO BE SORRY ABOUT. YOU DID VERY WELL, **PARRISH**, VERY WELL INDEED.

YEAH, KID, SWELL.

SO, WE'RE LOOKING FOR A **GREEN-MASK-WEARING TARZAN IMPERSONATOR**. HOW MUCH YOU GONNA STAKE ON THE WITNESS TESTIMONY OF A **FLEETINGLY RESUSCITATED OCTOGENARIAN**?

IT IS PRETTY FAR-FETCHED, BUT IT'S ALL WE'VE GOT SO FAR.

BESIDES, THESE TWO HOMICIDES ARE PRETTY FREAKIN' FAR-FETCHED THEMSELVES. WHY **NOT** A TARZAN IMPERSONATOR?

SO, ALDO, YOU'RE FULL OF **BEANS** TODAY, AREN'T YOU? MR. GREPINI COULD DO WITH SOME **GOOD** NEWS, COULDN'T HE? HE'S BEEN MIGHTY GRUMPY LATELY.

OH, I THINK I'VE GOT JUST THE MONDAY MORNING WAKE-UP CALL OLD MAN GREPINI'S BEEN A-HUNGERING FOR. YES INDEEDY.

GREPCO TOYS

GOOD MORNING, I--

YOIKS, IT'S LIKE A COUPLA **STEPFORD EMPLOYEES** IN HERE!

WHAT'S WITH THE BIG **SMILES**? IT'S MONDAY!

MR. KRASKER HAS SOMETHING HE WANTS TO **SHOW** YOU, MR. GREPINI. SOMETHING TO START OFF YOUR WEEK ON THE RIGHT NOTE.

GREPCO

IZZAT SO? WELL, WILL YOU WALK INTO MY PARLOR, **CHUCKLES**?

SO, **ALDO**, YOU'RE HERE TO MAKE ME A **HAPPY** MAN. I TRUST YOU HAD A **PRODUCTIVE** WEEKEND?

GREPCO TOYS

YES, I DID, SIR. I THINK I'VE GOT THE **CURE** FOR WHAT AILS YOU.

LET ME TAKE YOU TO...

TIKI TOWN

YESSIREE, THE KIDS'LL BE **CRAZY** FOR "**TIKI TOWN**," SIR. HOME OF THE HEROIC AVENGER "**BEJEWELED TIKI MASKMAN**!!!" KIDS ARE **NUTS** FOR THIS WHOLE **COCKTAIL GENERATION** THING!

GO ON, GO ON!

YES, FOR **YEARS** KIDS HAVE HUNGERED TO BE MORE LIKE **ADULTS** --SOPHISTICATED, **WORLDLY** ADULTS! THIS **COCKTAIL NATION** TREND IS WHAT THE KIDS HAVE WANTED FOR **YEARS**, BUT IT'S STILL AIMED TOO HIGH, ONLY AT YOUNG **ADULTS**!

WELL, WHO SAYS YOU'VE GOTTA **SMOKE** AND **DRINK** TO BE A PART OF THE **COCKTAIL REVOLUTION**? WITH "**TIKI TOWN**" THE KIDS'LL **HAVE** THEIR COCKTAILS AND **DRINK** THEM TOO! THINK OF THE **CROSS PROMOTIONS** WITH **SOFT-DRINK COMPANIES** ALONE!

SELL ME, YOU BEAUTIFUL **BASTARD**!

WITH THE JOINED BRUTE--YET **SMOOTH** AS AN **ALCOHOL-FREE BANANA DAIQUIRI**--FORCES OF "**TIKILAD**" AND "**TIKIGAL**," "**BEJEWELED TIKI MASK-MAN**" IS AN **UNSTOPPABLE CRIME FIGHTING MACHINE**!

I WAS **WRONG** ABOUT YOU, ALDO! I DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD IT IN YOU, BUT THIS IDEA OF YOURS IS **EXCITING**, **FRESH**, AND **FANTASTIC**! I'M GOING TO GET **PROTOTYPES** MADE UP BY WEEK'S END! TAKE THE REST OF THE DAY OFF, ALDO, YOU'VE **EARNED** SOME FREE TIME!

LEAVING SO **EARLY**, ALDO? I HOPE MR. GREPINI DIDN'T **FIRE** YOU. I HEARD A LOT OF SHOUTING.

NO, NO, HE DIDN'T FIRE ME. HE GAVE ME THE DAY OFF. HE LOVED MY STUFF. HE ACTUALLY LOVED MY STUFF.

I ALMOST FEEL *GUILTY* FOR PITCHING THAT *TIKI CRAP* AT GREPINI. I THOUGHT HE'D *GRUDGINGLY* GIVE IT A GO AHEAD, BUT HE WAS *PSYCHED*. I DIDN'T FIGURE HE'D BE GRATEFUL ENOUGH TO GIVE ME THE DAY OFF. THAT WAS REALLY HUMAN OF HIM.

HELL, I EARNED IT. EVEN IF I DON'T REMEMBER DOING ALL THE WORK.

LET'S REVIEW, GENTLEMEN, FROM THE TOP!

OKAY, CAP. VICTIM ONE IS *NICK HOPPER*, INVESTMENT BANKER AND FITNESS ENTHUSIAST. HE WAS FOUND CRUCIFIED TO THE WALL OF HIS SOHO LOFT WITH SHARPENED HAND WEIGHTS.

POLICE

ICE

VICTIM NUMERO DOS IS *GAVIN BECHER*, "FOOD STYLIST" :COUGH, COUGH: AND DANCE ENTHUSIAST. HE WAS FOUND DANGLING MARIONETTE-LIKE FROM HIS EIGHTEENTH-STORY WINDOW OVER ON TENTH AVENUE.

CRUCIFIED

DO WE HAVE ANY *WITNESSES*?

THERE WAS AN OLD MAN WHO, AFTER HAVING BEEN BROUGHT BACK FROM THE *DEAD*, SEEMED TO THINK HE SAW A *GREEN-FACED TARZAN* SWINGING AWAY FROM BECHER'S MURDER SCENE.

WE'RE NOT TOO SURE HOW MUCH *CREDENCE* TO GIVE TO THAT STORY, THOUGH. HIS WIFE HAD JUST DIED *MOMENTS* BEFORE AND HE *HIMSELF* WAS LEGALLY DEMISED FOR A FEW, TOO, BEFORE HE DECIDED TO MAKE IT *PERMANENT*.

SO, WE'VE GOT *SQUAT*.

IN ESSENCE.

PRETTY MUCH.

OKAY, IF ALL WE'VE GOT IS THE TESTIMONY OF A DEAD OLD MAN, THEN *THAT'S* WHAT WE RUN WITH. PUT IT OUT ON THE *WIRE* THAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR A *GREEN-FACED TARZAN IMPERSONATOR*. MAYBE WE'LL TURN UP *SOMETHING*.

UM, YEAH, LIKE MAYBE DEPARTMENT-WIDE *RIDICULE*?

MITCH'S GOT A POINT, CAP...

YOU GOT ANYTHING *ELSE*? *HAH*? *NO*, YOU *DON'T*, SO RUN WITH THIS OR I'LL HAVE YOUR *ASSES* FOR *LUNCH*!

YESSIR! RIGHT AWAY, SIR!

I FEEL LIKE A REAL *JERK*, TYPING THIS IN. WE'RE GONNA BE LAUGHING STOCKS, SAM.

WHERE'S THAT SENSE OF *WHIMSY* YOU WERE BOASTING ABOUT?

SHUT UP.

FAIT ACCOMPLI. OUR *REPUTATIONS* ARE *TOAST*.

MAZEL TOV.

HEY, KID, MY BOSS REALLY ATE UP THAT "*TIKI TOWN*" STUFF I WAS TALKING WITH YOU ABOUT.

HE MUST BE AN *IDIOT*.

STOOP SALE
JUST COS I DON'T WANNIT NO MORE
DON'T MEAN YOU WON'T

WHAT A CHARMING LAD.

WHAT DO I WANT TO DO WITH MYSELF FOR THE REST OF THE DAY?

STUPID INVITE. YOU *HAD* TO RUIN MY GOOD MOOD, DIDN'T YOU?

WELL, I SUPPOSE CLEANING ***EGGS*** OFF MY FLOOR FOR A WHILE WOULD BE A ***REAL FUN*** ACTIVITY. I'M ***SO*** GLAD I GOT OFF WORK EARLY TODAY.

THUMP!

OUCH!

WELL, HELLO THERE. DO YOU WANT TO PLAY WITH ME, *TIKI MASKMAN*?

I ALWAYS WANNA PLAY! NATCH!

EDGE CITY, SOME UNGODLY HOUR OF THE NIGHT.

STEP ASIDE, WOULD YA? C'MON, **MAKE WAY!** COMING THROUGH. BEAT CHEEKS, YOU **ANIMALS!** HEY, **DEMPSEY**, YOU STILL THERE? I CAN'T **SEE** YOU!

YEAH, LIEUTENANT, I'M HERE. JUST KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRINT OUT!

SO, WHAT'VE YOU GOT THAT'S SO DAMNED **INTERESTING** YOU HADDA PULL ME OUTTA **BED** TO SEE? GIVE IT HERE.

THIS CAME OVER THE WIRE AND I JUST FIGURED **YOU'D** WANNA SEE IT BEFORE...

TWO HOMICIDES... YADDA, YADDA... NO... IT COULDN'T BE... IT IS.

IT'S BACK.

I'VE GOTTA GET TO NEW YORK, ON THE DOUBLE.

GEEZ, YOU'RE WELCOME, LIEUTENANT.

DETECTIVES... PAH.

AT THE SAME UNGODLY HOUR, BACK IN NEW YORK.

QUIT PUSHING!

I'M JUST GETTING STARTED, GIRLFRIEND!

DER MANN HOLE

DER M HOL

I'M NOT WITH THEM.

YEAH, YEAH.

COME ONNNNN! I HAVEN'T GOT ALL NIIIIGHT! MOVE IT, SISTER! IT'S FREEZING OUT HERE AND I'M NOT GETTING ANY YOUNGER! :WHINE:

YOU GOT THAT RIGHT, OLD MAN. YOU LOOK LIKE A FOOL IN THAT OUTFIT.

WHO ARE YOU TO JUDGE, SISTER MARY J.C. PENNEY? YOU'RE ALL OFF THE RACK, CHICA. NO STYLE AT ALL. YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS OF SOMEONE WHO'S GOT IT GOIN' ON!

I'M NOT EVEN GOING TO DIGNIFY THAT WITH A RESPONSE. WORK OUT YOUR INADEQUACIES ON SOMEONE ELSE, MORON.

A WELL-HEELED SWINGER WITH AN AWFUL LOTTA LETTUCE!

AS IF SOMEONE IN A MONEY-DRIPPING RIDE LIKE THAT WOULD BE INTERESTED IN AN OLD HAG LIKE YOU.

THIS COULD BE MY KNIGHT IN SHINING SPANDEX. OH, WHOEVER YOU ARE, PICK ME. PICK ME!

AS IF.

GOING TO CLUBS IS TOO TIRING FOR THE LIKES OF SOMEONE AS FABULOUS AS ME. I'D RATHER JUST PICK A SPECIAL PLAYMATE AND GO HOME WITH THEM.

YOU.

I'LL BE DAMNED.

...AND I'M TELLING *YOU* THAT UNTIL *SOMETHING MORE SOLID* COMES IN, I'M *NOT* SENDING YOU TO NEW YORK TO CHECK THINGS OUT THERE! IT'S SIMPLY *NOT* IN THE *BUDGET*!

IT'S THE SAME GUY, CAP, PLAIN AND SIMPLE!

IT'S NOT IN THE *BUDGET*? *FINE*, I'LL PAY MY *OWN* WAY. I'M TAKING SOME *PERSONAL DAYS*, CAP!

WE NEED YOU *HERE*, KELLAWAY! DAMN YOU!

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU PICKED ME. I'M *SO* FLATTERED. WHEN I SAW YOU...THIS *AMAZING ENSEMBLE*! I ALWAYS WANTED TO DESIGN COSTUMES LIKE THIS. I WORK IN THE GARMENT TRADE, NOW, BUT I NEVER GET TO DESIGN NOTHING LIKE THIS.

REALLY, DO GO ON.

ALL MY LIFE I'VE BEEN INTO **FASHION**. SO **WHAT** IF SOME PEOPLE THINK IT'S **SHALLOW**, I **KNOW** IT'S REALLY **THE** MOST **IMPORTANT** THING IN **LIFE**! **FASHION** IS AS IMPORTANT AS **MEDICINE** AND **SCIENCE** AND **ALL** THAT!

MMMMM. GO ON.

IN **HIGH SCHOOL** I WAS IN THE **DRAMA SOCIETY** AND I DID **ALL** THE FLY COSTUME DESIGNS! I COULD WORK **MAGIC** ON A SHOESTRING BUDGET! BUT EVERYONE ELSE WAS **TOTAL LOSERS**!

I ALWAYS KNEW I'D FIND **MY** PRINCE CHARMING, THOUGH. OR **PRINCESS** CHARMING. =**SIMPER**=

WHEN I SAW YOU STANDING THERE I SIMPLY KNEW **YOU** WERE THE ONE.

LIKEWISE, YOUR **MAJESTY**. ALL MY LIFE I'VE **DREAMED** OF BEING SWEPT AWAY BY **ROYALTY**. YOU'RE SIMPLY TO **DIE** FOR...

HOW **RIGHT** YOU ARE, **CURTIS**, BABY, HOW **RIGHT** YOU ARE.

YOU KNOW MY NAME?

AND I'VE GOT **YOUR** NUMBER, **CURTIS SHASTA**, YOU LITTLE **TART**! AND INCIDENTALLY, CALL ME PRINCE **HARMING**!

GAAAAH! WHO **ARE** YOU? **WHAT** ARE YOU?

UUAAAAGH!!

<GROAN> ANOTHER FREAKY STIFF, HUH? <YAWN> WHY CAN'T THEY BE DISCOVERED *AFTER* I'VE GOTTEN A FULL EIGHT HOURS SLEEP? YEAH, ON MY WAY.

HOW I ENVY YOU, MARIA. I SWEAR, YOU COULD SLEEP THROUGH ARMAGEDDON.

I HATE THE SMELL OF COAGULATING BLOOD IN THE MORNING. GOD, THIS AREA ALWAYS REEKS.

YUM

WHEN WE GETTING IN, OFFISUH?

YEAH, WE GOT *MEAT* TO UNLOAD.

SO DO *WE*, PAL. BE PATIENT.

MORNING, PARD. HERE, HAVE A CUPPA COFFEE. IT'S A *DECAF LATTÉ*.

BRANDY, YOU'RE A FINE GIRL. WHAT A GOOD WIFE YOU WOULD BE.

SO, WHATTA WE GOT?

I'M NOT VEGETARIAN, BUT I DON'T THINK I COULD EAT MEAT AFTER WORKING IN A PLACE LIKE *THIS*. PEE-YOO.

YEAH.

PARRISH, *THIS* THE GUY?

YEAH, DETECTIVE, THIS IS THE *FOREMAN*, AL *BOLLINSKY*.

MR. BOLLINSKY, I'M LT. PETRILLO, MY PARTNER SAM DUKE. SO, YOU FOUND THE BODY?

HELLUVA WAY T'START DA DAY, I GOTTA TELL YOUSE. I'M USED T'SEEIN' ALL KINDSA *DEAD FLESH*, BUT *DIS*?

THIS IS ONE *SICK PUPPY* WE'RE LOOKING FOR.

DIS NEIGHBAHOOD, AFTA DARK? FUHGET ABOUD IT. DA FREAKS COME OUT AT NIGHT, *POIVOITS* ALL OF 'EM. *FAGS*, *HOOKUHS*, *JUNKIES*, YOU NAME IT.

HAS ANYONE *BOTHERED* TO FIND OUT HIS *IDENTITY*? WHO *IS* THAT MASKED MAN?

YEAH, HIS NAME IS *CURTIS SHASTA*, AGE THIRTY-FIVE. HE WAS LAST SEEN ALIVE AT A GAY NIGHT SPOT CALLED *DER MANN HOLE*, OVER ON BETHUNE. HE GOT INTO A LIMOUSINE WITH A *LARGE DRAG QUEEN* AND THAT'S ALL WE KNOW SO FAR.

MAYBE I'M **WRONG** ABOUT THIS "TIKI TOWN" STUFF. MAYBE IT **IS** A **GOOD** IDEA. HMMM. I DON'T KNOW IF THAT PLEASES OR **DISPLEASES** ME.

AFTERNOON, ALDO! I'VE GOT **EXCITING** NEWS FOR YOU!

FIRST OFF, I GOT THE FIRST **"TIKI TOWN" PROTOTYPE** IN THIS MORNING FROM PHIL IN THE SCULPTING DEPARTMENT. IT LOOKS **GRAND!**

GEE, **THAT** WAS QUICK. WHEN DO I GET TO SEE IT?

THAT'S MY **SECOND** PIECE OF GOOD NEWS: IT'S IN THE **CORNER OFFICE** NEXT TO **MINE**, WHICH I'M GIVING **YOU!**

WHAT?!? I...I CAN'T **BELIEVE** IT!

I LIKED HIM BETTER WITH THE **MASK** ON.

HEY, IT SAYS **"NO SMOKING"** ON THE SIGN THERE.

AMEN.

SO **ARREST** ME.

WHO'S IN **CHARGE** OF THIS INVESTIGATION?

I'**M** THE PRIMARY. WHO'RE **YOU**?

YEAH, THIS IS A CRIME SCENE, PAL. GOT CLEARANCE?

YEAH, YEAH. I'M *KELLAWAY*, IN FROM EDGE CITY. I SAW YOUR ITEM ON THE WIRE ABOUT THE *GREEN-FACED TARZAN*.

OH? *AND*?

YEAH, WHAT ABOUT IT?

WE HAD ONE OF THOSE IN *EDGE CITY*. NOT A *TARZAN*, PER SE, BUT THE SAME PRINCIPLE.

THE SAME PRINCIPLE.

AS THE GREEN-FACED TARZAN. CARE TO ELABORATE?

THERE'S THIS *ANCIENT MASK*. I DON'T KNOW *HOW* IT WORKS, ONLY THAT IT *DOES*, BUT THE WEARER IS IMBUED WITH THE ABILITY TO *ALTER* REALITY. HE CAN BECOME SUPER-STRONG, FLY, *ANYTHING*. MAKE OBJECTS APPEAR OUT OF THIN AIR.

UH... *HUH*.

RIGHT.

WE'LL BE IN TOUCH WHEN YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING *USEFUL* TO TELL US.

YEAH, *THANKS*, KELLAWAY. WE'RE DUE BACK IN *REALITY* NOW. WE'VE GOT SOME CASES TO PUT DOWN.

WHAT?!? YOU THINK I'M MAKIN' THIS CRAP UP?

WHY WOULD I FLY HERE ON *MY* OWN DIME TO *WASTE* YOUR TIME? *AND* MINE? YOU'RE BOTH COPS, SAME AS *ME!* ON A COP'S SALARY I'D ONLY DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IF I WAS *CRAZY!*

YOU SAID IT, *NOT* ME.

LATER, KELLAWAY.

1702

SO, ALDO, HERE'S YOUR NEW DIGS! I HOPE YOU LIKE THEM. A *HAPPY* WORKER IS A *PRODUCTIVE* WORKER!

I *LOVE* THIS OFFICE! IT'S *GREAT*! IT'S-- OH MY!

OH MY *GOSH*. IT'S *FLAWLESS*, RIGHT DOWN TO THE COLORING. IT'S ALMOST *INDISTINGUISHABLE* FROM...

FROM *WHAT*, BOYO?

UH... MY *DRAWINGS*, OF COURSE! IT'S *PERFECT*! I GUESS I'M JUST SURPRISED AT HOW *GOOD* IT IS.

WELL, PHIL *IS* A BIT OF A *PERFECTIONIST*. *YOU* KNOW THAT.

I FIGURED WE'D START HIM OFF WITH THE *MASK*, THEN GET TO THE ACTION FIGURES, SINCE THEY'RE A BIT MORE *COMPLEX* AND...

UM, MR. GREPINI, I'D LIKE TO GO *CONGRATULATE* PHIL ON THE GOOD JOB HE DID. YOU MIND?

HUH? OH, *NO*. GO ON, THEN.

HOW THE HELL DID PHIL KNOW WHAT *COLORS* TO USE?

& DEVE DEPARTMENT

PHIL, I GOTTA TALK TO YOU ABOUT THIS--

--MASK! HOLY MOLEY! HOW'D YOU GET THESE DONE SO FAST? HOW'D YOU KNOW WHAT COLORS TO USE?

THE PLANS YOU GAVE ME WERE PRETTY SPECIFIC, ALDO, COLOR GUIDES INCLUDED. DON'T YOU REMEMBER?

SEE? WHAT'D YOU HAVE, A CREATIVE BLACKOUT? I HAVE THOSE ALL THE TIME.

UH, YEAH, THAT MUST BE IT. THAT WHOLE WEEKEND WAS KIND OF A BLUR.

THANKS, PHIL. NICE WORK.

SAY, COULD I HAVE A COUPLE OF THESE?

BOY, THIS MASK THING IS WEIRD. I'M FORGETTING EVERYTHING LATELY.

DEPARTMENT

I REALLY CAN'T SEEM TO KEEP MY HEAD STRAIGHT THESE DAYS.

GOOD NIGHT, ALDO!

YAH!

OH, GOOD NIGHT, MR. GREPINI.

CALL ME GUY.

G'NIGHT, GUY.

IT'S KIND OF DISTURBING THE WAY I'M BLANKING OUT ON STUFF THESE PAST FEW DAYS. I DON'T LIKE IT. IT MUST BE STRESS.

STRESS KILLS.

HOW LONG DO YOU TWO THINK I CAN KEEP THE PRESS AT BAY?

THIS TREND IS LEADING SOMEWHERE, HARDY. ALL THREE VICTIMS ARE VIRTUALLY THE SAME AGE, SAME SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS.

THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE WAYS THEY WERE POSED. I THINK IT'S LIKE THAT MOVIE WITH THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS. I THINK THE KILLER IS A COPYCAT.

RUNNING JOGGING
DIAPERS CRUCIFIED
HIGH FINANCE
DANCING FOOD
STYLING HIGHER
EDUCATION
S+M
FETISH FLOWERS
SKIPPING GAY
PROMISCUITY

I DUNNO, SAM, I GOT MY OWN THEORY.

I WAS A THEOLOGY MAJOR IN COLLEGE. THESE THREE ARE TELLING US SOMETHING: THEY *DIED* FOR THEIR *SINS*, PERCEIVED OR ACTUAL, IT DOESN'T MATTER.

GO ON.

FITNESS
JOGGING
DANCING
STYLING
EDUCATIO
PUPPETR

"OKAY, THE FIRST ONE, *NICK HOPPER*, IS *PRIDE*. HE WAS A *VAIN* MAN, COMPLETELY ABSORBED BY *APPEARANCES*. HIS WHOLE LIFESTYLE REFLECTED HIS *SUPERFICIAL* VALUES.

"THE SECOND, *GAVIN BECHER*, IS *GREED*. HIS APARTMENT WAS A *SHRINE* TO MATERIAL POSSESSIONS.

"HIS BODY WAS FOUND DRESSED IN A *PREP SCHOOL* UNIFORM, THE POCKETS *BRIMMING* WITH *HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS*.

"AND NOW, *CURTIS SHASTA* IS *LUST*. HE WAS A CLUB-HOPPING, *PROMISCUOUS* MAN, OBSESSED WITH SEX. HE WAS DRESSED AS A *FROLICKING PERVERT*, TOSSING *RUBBERS* OVER HIS SHOULDER. THAT LEAVES *ANGER*, *ENVY*, *GLUTTONY*, AND *SLOTH*."

I AGREE ABOUT THE PATTERN, BUT I *DON'T* THINK THIS GUY IS COPYING THE MOVIE OR *PREACHING* TO US. I WAS A *LIT* MAJOR, AND I THINK HE'S DOING *SHAKESPEARE*.

SHAKESPEARE? HOW SO?

OKAY, *INDULGE* ME FOR A MOMENT. IN "*AS YOU LIKE IT*" SHAKY WROTE THE FAMOUS "ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE" BIT, RIGHT?

EXERCISE, FITNESS, RUNNING, JOGGING, DIAPERS, CRUCIFIED, HIGH FINANCE, DANCING, FOOD STYLING, HIGHER EDUCATION, PUPPETRY, S+M, FETISH, FLOWERS, SKIPPING, GAY PROMISCUITY

SO?

AFTER THOSE RENOWNED OPENING WORDS, MOST PEOPLE FORGET THE REST, BUT HE GOES ON TO DESCRIBE *THE SEVEN AGES OF MAN.*

HOPPER IS THE *FIRST* STAGE: *INFANT.* THAT'S WHY HE WAS WEARING THE *DIAPERS.*

BECHER IS THE *SECOND* STAGE: *SCHOOL BOY,* HENCE THE *UNIFORM.*

SHASTA IS THE *THIRD* STAGE: THE *LOVER,* THUS ALL THE *SEX PARAPHERNALIA.* THAT LEAVES US WITH THE *SOLDIER,* THE *JUSTICE, OLD AGE,* AND *SECOND CHILDHOOD.*

SO, YOU *BOTH* HAVE THEORIES, BUT BOTH ADD UP TO *SEVEN,* WHICH MEANS IF YOU'RE *RIGHT* THERE'S *FOUR MORE MURDERS TO COME.*

WE CAN'T *ALLOW* THAT TO HAPPEN, *CAN* WE, *GENTLEMEN?!?*

NO SIR!

BETCHA A TEN-SPOT THE NEXT ONE IS *ANGER.*

NO WAY, SAM. IT'LL BE *THE SOLDIER.*

PHIL SURE DID A GOOD JOB ON THESE. I CAN'T TELL BY *SIGHT* WHICH THE *REAL* ONE IS. WOW. I GUESS THOSE SCHEMATICS I DID--BUT DON'T *REMEMBER* HAVING *DONE*--WERE BETTER THAN I'D THOUGHT.

OKAY, TIME TO FIND THE *IMPOSTERS*. WILL THE *REAL* MASK PLEASE STAND UP?

IS IT YOU?

NOPE, TOO *NEW*.

IS IT YOU?

NOPE, TOO *LIGHT*.

AND HOW'S ABOUT YOU?

JUST RIIIIGHT! HEH, HEH, HEH!

WHAT TO DO TONIGHT, OR SHOULD I ASK **WHOM** TO DO TONIGHT? WHICH OF YOU, MY TORMENTORS, SHALL PERISH THIS EVE? **THAT'S** IT!

THAT'S IT!

CITY BANK

SPARE ANY CHANGE FOR THE *HOMELESS*?

GET A *JOB*, PAL. I CAN OPEN THE DOOR FOR *MYSELF*, THANKS.

SHOP

CITY BANK

CITY BANK

BUT **SOFT**! WHAT **LIGHT** THROUGH YONDER WINDOW BREAKS? IT IS THE **EAST** SIDE OF THE STREET AND TONIGHT'S QUARRY IS **EVE KOPFSALAT**, BARDARD'S RESIDENT **ICE QUEEN** AND **TEASE**!

EVERY DAY, IN EVERY WAY THIS CITY GETS ***LESS LIVABLE***. "SPARE ANY CHANGE FOR THE ***HOMELESS***?" THE ***HOMELESS***! LIKE HE'S AN ***OFFICIAL*** REPRESENTATIVE COLLECTING FOR THE ***GROUP***. GOD, THAT ***BURNS*** ME.

YOU, SIR, ARE A ***MAGGOT*** ON THIS ***FESTERING CORPSE*** OF A ***CITY***, AND ***I***, FOR ONE, AM ***TIRED*** OF GETTING ***BADGERED*** FOR ***CHANGE*** EVERY TIME I LEAVE MY ***HOME***!

UNNNGH!

CRACK!

OOOOH, THAT HADDA HURT! HEY, GUY, YOU ALL RIGHT?

<GROAN> I'LL LIVE. <SNIFF> AT LEAST I GOT A QUICK PEEK AT HER PANTIES. HEH, HEH.

OCCH, LAD, THA'S NO WAY T'BE SPEAKIN' O' A FAIR LASS!

AN' IN TRUE HIGHLAND TRADITION, AS YOU CAN PLAINLY SEE, I'M NAY WEARIN ANY KNICKERS, SO NO PANTY PEEKIN' FOR YOU, LAD!

YEEAAAGGGH!

HOME SWEET HO...

NOT AGAIN!

SPARE ANY CHANGE FOR THE...

...VENGEFUL?!?

GAH! THE HELL?!?

I DON'T KNOW **WHO** YOU ARE, **FREAKO**, BUT I'VE HAD ALL I CAN **HANDLE** FOR **ONE** NIGHT! **HIKEEBA!**

GUH.

HALLOWEEN'S **OVER**, YOU %#*ƷIN' **JACKASS.**

OOOOOOGH.

FRIGGIN' CITY IS OVERRUN BY **VERMIN** OF ALL **SHAPES** AND **SIZES**. CAN'T WALK TEN FEET WITHOUT SOME **OILY HEAP OF CRAP** TRYING TO **SCROUNGE** SOMETHING OFF YOU.

CAN'T YOU FIND IT IN YOUR HEART TO...

OH, FOR CRYING OUT **LOUD!**

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH, SCUMBAG!

HULLERKK!

UGH.

YOU CREEPS VIOLATE EVERY SPACE YOU CAN SQUEEZE INTO! HI-YAHH!

ARG.

YOU'RE LIKE ROACHES! YAAH!

GET OUTTA HERE BEFORE I CALL THE COPS AND TELL 'EM TO BRING A BODY BAG!

WHAT A NIGHT. I NEED A DRINK.

NOPE. WHAT YOU NEED IS ONE OF THOSE BODY BAGS YOU MENTIONED.

GACK!

WHUMP

EEEAAAG

MORNING.

UH, ALDO, WHAT'RE YOU *DOING* HERE, MAN?

WHA'?

WHAT'S UP, ALDO? DID YOU *SLEEP* HERE LAST NIGHT? YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'M...UM... ACTUALLY, I'M NOT SURE *WHAT* I'M DOING HERE. SORRY.

YOU NEED A HAND, ALDO?

MAYBE SOME COFFEE. I...I DUNNO, IT MUST BE STRESS OR *SOMETHING*. I DID ALL THOSE DRAWINGS AND NOW, I DUNNO.

THOSE PLANS ARE SOMETHING *ELSE*, ALDO. REALLY INSPIRED STUFF. I'VE GOT THE WAX PRELIMS OF "*BEJEWELED TIKI MASKMAN*" IN MY BAG. WANNA SEE?

SURE.

IT...IT LOOKS REALLY GOOD, PHIL. I'M...I REALLY LIKE IT. IT'S GREAT. LOOK, I'VE GOTTA GO TO THE HEAD. EXCUSE ME.

WHAT THE *HELL* DID I GET *UP* TO LAST NIGHT? HAVE I DEVELOPED A *DRUG* HABIT SO CLANDESTINE EVEN *I* DON'T KNOW ABOUT IT?

WE'VE GOT TO STOP MEETING LIKE THIS.

LET'S SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT ON THE MENU TODAY.

LINE POLICE LINE

WHAT A WASTE.

YEAH, A GOOD-LOOKIN' GIRL LIKE THIS. STILL, I'VE GOT ONLY ONE THING TO SAY...

YEAH?

YOU OWE ME TEN BUCKS, PAL.

THE HELL YOU SAY. SHE IS DEFINITELY ANGER. LOOK AT HER FACE!

YOU'RE OUTTA YOUR TREE! LOOK AT THE OUTFIT SHE'S IN: THE FLAK JACKET, THE CAMOUFLAGE! SHE'S THE SOLDIER!

MAYBE YOU'RE **BOTH** WRONG!

HUH?

OR MAYBE YOU'RE **BOTH** RIGHT!

NOT **YOU** AGAIN!

HEY, KELLAWAY, AREN'T YOU A LITTLE OUT OF YOUR JURISDICTION?

LISTEN TO ME, YOU TWO **MONKEY-WITS**, I **KNOW** THIS **CREEP**! I'VE DEALT WITH HIM **BEFORE** AND I'M **SMARTER** THAN YOU TWO, **BELIEVE** ME! TAKE MY HELP AND WE'LL **NAIL** THIS SONUVABITCH!

IF WE **WANTED** YOUR HELP, WE'D HAVE **ASKED** FOR IT.

I TALKED WITH **HARDY** AT **YOUR** PRECINCT AND **HE** SAID YOU'D **BETTER** LISTEN UP! **HE** WANTS THIS CASE **WRAPPED UP!**

ERGO, HE WANTS **ME** IN ON THE **INVESTIGATION**, BOYS!

WELL, DON'T JUST **STAND** THERE. WE'VE GOT A CASE TO **SOLVE**!

LATE MORNING IN LITTLE ITALY, NEW YORK CITY.

FATTY, FATTY, TWO-BY-FOUR, CAN'T GET THROUGH THE KITCHEN DOOR!

YOU KIDS SHOULD MIND YOUR **MOUTHS**, LEST YOU WIND UP SLEEPING WITH THE **FISHES**, I SHOULD MAKE IT SO.

PLEASE FORGIVE, **SIGNORE CANNIGLIARI**, I MAKE-A-DEM **KEEDS** GO-A AWAY!

SEE YOU **DO** THAT, ALPHONSE. THEIR **CHANTING** UNSETTLES MY **GUT**.

GRUNT! IF THE **FOOD** HERE WASN'T SO GOOD, I'D **NEVER** PUT MYSELF THROUGH THE DISCOMFORTS I ENDURE TO DINE HERE! **URGH!**

YOU GO-A OUTSIDE AND CHASE-A DOSE KEEDS AWAY, **ANH?** SIGNORE CANNIGLIARI NO LIKE-A DEM HERE!

I'LL START WITH THE *INSALATA DI BRISCO*, *HEAVY* ON THE OLIVE OIL, AN ORDER OF *BRUSCHETTA CONPOMODORO*, FOLLOWED BY *FUSILI PIEMONTE*, AND A MAIN COURSE OF *SALMONE GRILLATO*. YOU *GOT* THAT?

SI, I GOT IT, SIGNORE CANNIGLIARI.

HOKAY, WE GOTTA *BEEG* ORDER HERE FROM SIGNORE CANNIGLIARI, *CAPITO*. SO LET'S-A MAKE IT HAPPEN, *ANH*? WE GOT AN *INSALATA DI BRISCO*, *HEAVY* ON THE OLIVE OIL, AN ORDER OF...

YEAH, YEAH, WHEN I'M GOOD AN' READY. I'M *WORKIN'* ON SOMETHIN' HERE!

YOU *CRAZY*? *ANH*? IS-A DAT EET? SIGNORE CANNIGLIARI EES AN *IMPORTANT* MAN, ANH? YOU *NEW* HERE, *ANH*?

HE'S-A DE *JUDGE* WE GOT ON-A DE *TAKE*. *ANH*? HE KEEP-A DE *BOSS* FROM-A DE *POKY*, SO YOU DROP-A WHAT YOU *DO* AN' GET-A WIT' DE *PROGRAM*!

LISTEN, BUB, I'M *NOT* A SHORT-ORDER COOK, I'M AN *ARTIST*, "HOKAY"?

YI-YI-YI!!!

WHYN'TCHA TAKE THE DAY OFF, PAL, "HOKAY"? I'LL *SEE* TO CANNIGLIARI!

MAKE-A WAY FO' DE CHEF-A!

MAMA MIA!

PASTAFAZOOL!

TAKE-A DE DAY OFF, BOYS! HE'S-A CRAZY!

THE HELL ARE YOU JAMOKES OFF TO? WHERE'S MY LUNCH?

GREETINGS FROM-A DE CHEF-A, SIGNORE CANNIGLIARI! I'M-A HOPE-A DEES-A MEAL-A MAKE-A YOU HAPPY!

OKAY, FREAKO, THIS CHOW HAD BETTER BE GOOD! I'M A POWERFUL JUDGE IN THIS BURG, SO IF YOU MONKEY WITH ME, YOU'RE IN TROUBLE DEEP. LET'S HAVE IT!

WELL, I DON'T KNOW HOW GOOD THIS CHOW IS, BUT I'M DEFINITELY OUT TO MONKEY WITH YOU.

GRROOWL!

ROOAR!

-aarghh!

NOPE, THAT'S DEFINITELY NOT A GOOD CHOW.

OOH, DAT'S GOTTA HOIT!

GROWL! CHOMP!

-Snap! Pummel!

... AND THIS GUY SHE WAS KICKING THE BEJEEBERS OUT OF WAS ONE ***ODD-LOOKING WEIRDO***, I'LL TELL ***YOU***. HIS ***SKIN*** WAS ***PEA-GREEN*** AND HE--

DID YOU SAY ***PEA-GREEN SKIN***?

OH BOY.

WHAT? ***WHAT***?!? DID I ***HEAR***--?

YEAH, YOU ***HEARD***, ALREADY!?

I'M TALKIN' TO ***GRAMPS***, HERE! GIMME THE LOWDOWN, POPS.

I WAS JUST TELLING THESE TWO GENTS I HEARD A ***RUCKUS*** IN THE HALL AND TOOK A GANDER THROUGH MY ***PEEPHOLE***.

THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE ***THERE*** FOR, ***RIGHT***?

I SAW MISS KOPFSALAT DOING ***KARATE*** MOVES LIKE IN THE ***MOVIES*** ON THIS ***SICKLY LOOKING, GREEN-FACED VAGRANT***. HE WAS GETTING THE ***SNOTS*** KNOCKED OUT OF HIM. I CAN'T SEE HOW ***HE'D*** HAVE DONE AWAY WITH HER. SHE WAS ONE ***TOUGH*** BROAD.

OUCH! ***CAREFUL***, SONNY, I BRUISE LIKE A ***PEACH***.

YOU ***SEE***? I ***KNEW*** IT WAS MY GUY! IT'S THIS ***ANCIENT MASK*** THING! ***GREEN SKIN***! THE ***TARZAN*** GUY STRIKES AGAIN!

HOORAY FOR ***YOU***, KELLAWAY. ***WE*** PUT THAT CONNECTION TOGETHER ALL BY OURSELVES.

WANNA GRAB SOME ***LUNCH***, PARD'?

FINE. YOU TWO GO ***STUFF*** YOUR ***FACES***. I'LL BE WORKING ON THE ***CASE***.

GUESS I'LL LOOSEN THE **NOOSE** TO MAKE ROOM FOR ALL THAT **FACE-STUFFING** WE'RE OFF TO.

THAT **POTENTATE** OF **SELF-RIGHTEOUS-NESS** GIVES ME A **HEADACHE.**

SIRS, YOU GOTTA HURRY DOWN TO **PASQUALE'S CUCINA**, ON MULBERRY.

AN **URGENT DINING TIP** FROM OFFICER PARRISH. HOW NICE.

THAT'S NOT **TOO** FAR. I COULD GO FOR **ITALIAN.**

NO, SIRS, WHAT I MEANT WAS THERE'S BEEN ANOTHER **FREAKY MURDER** THERE. YOU GOTTA GO **OFFICIALLY.** FROM WHAT I HEARD, YOU'RE NOT GONNA WANNA **EAT** THERE EITHER.

CRAP.

Y'KNOW, **SUDDENLY** I'M HUNGRY FOR **ITALIAN**, M'SELF. THINK I'LL **JOIN** YOU AFTER ALL.

FABULOUS.

GO AHEAD. MAKE OUR DAY.

-**GROAN**- WHAT'VE I BEEN **UP** TO? I FEEL LIKE ABSOLUTE HELL.

HEY, MAC, GETCHER SELF A CUPPA JOE ON **ME.**

WHERE THE HECK *AM* I? I'M REALLY WORRIED ABOUT ME. I MUST BE ON *DRUGS*, AND AM SO MESSED UP I DON'T EVEN *KNOW* IT. I'D BETTER SEE THE DOCTOR AT WORK.

WORK?!? OH *GOD*, WHAT *TIME* IS IT?

OH *GEEZ*, IT'S ALREADY ONE THIRTY-FIVE!

PASQUALE'S CUCINA

THERE IT IS!

TAXI!

TAXI

IT'S PRETTY **BAD** IN THERE, SIR. YOU MIGHT WANT TO--

SAVE IT FOR THOSE **NINNIES** BEHIND ME!

IF I **KILLED** HIM, WOULD YOU **RAT** ME OUT?

ONLY IF YOU DIDN'T LET **ME** HELP.

OH, **BOY**, I THINK I'M GONNA **PUKE**.

GO AHEAD, SON, A LITTLE **MORE** COULDN'T HURT.

I **DUNNO**, SAM. WOULDN'T WANT TO MIX **COP PUKE** WITH **EVIDENCE PUKE**.

JUST KEEP MAKING THOSE **LAME** JOKES, BOYS.

SO, WHO'VE WE GOT HERE?

THIS IS THE REMAINS OF **JUDGE VIGGO CANNIGLIARI**, AGE THIRTY-FIVE, WEIGHT THREE HUNDRED SEVENTY-FIVE POUNDS OF **GRADE-A CORRUPT, MOB-MONEY-SUCKING SLIME.**

SAM, MAYBE THE **STINK** IS CLOUDING YOUR VISION, BUT THIS GUY IS A FEW **DOZEN QUARTS LOW** TODAY, JUDGING BY THE RECENT **PAINT JOB** HE'S GIVEN THIS PLACE.

I HATE TO AGREE WITH YOUR PARTNER, BUT HE'S RIGHT. THIS GUY **PUKED** HIMSELF TO **DEATH.**

THIS? **NAW**, THIS GUY DON'T WEIGH NO **THREE SEVENTY-FIVE**. LOOK AT 'IM.

YOU SHOULDN'T'VE **DOUBLE-OR-NOTHINGED** OUR BET, PARD'. THIS IS DEFINITELY **GLUTTONY.**

YOU **NUTS**? THIS IS **THE JUSTICE.**

HOW CAN I HAVE **BEEN SO DUMB**? HOW COULD I HAVE **MISSED** IT?

YOU'RE **BOTH** WRONG!

SAY **WHAT**?!?

GREPCO TOYS

TAXI

OH GEEZ, OH GOSH! I AM **SO** LATE! GREPINI'S GONNA **KILL** ME, **PROMOTION** NOTWITHSTANDING!

THERE HE IS!

I CAN **EXPLAIN**, MR. GREPINI! I WAS--

RIGHT. **GUY.**

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO **TELL** YOU, ALDO--CALL ME **GUY**!

YOU CERTAINLY HAVE YOUR FINGER ON THE **PULSE**, ALDO, M'BOY. I WAS JUST READING THIS **ARTICLE** ON YOUR SO-CALLED "**COCKTAIL CULTURE**," AND BY GUMBAROO IT REALLY **IS** HOT STUFF. "**TIKI TOWN**" IS GOING TO **KILL**!

ALDO, YOU'RE NOT LOOKING WELL. YOU SHOULD TAKE A COUPLE OF DAYS OFF. YOU'VE DONE TONS OF FINE WORK AND THERE'S REALLY NO REASON TO COME IN. IT'S ALL IN PHIL'S HANDS NOW, SO...

THANKS, **GUY**. I THINK I WILL GO HOME. I'M REALLY **POOPED** ALL OVER. IN FACT I'D LIKE TO SEE **DR. LINSKY**.

YOU **WANT** ME TO DO A **DRUG SCREEN** ON YOU? YOU KNOW HOW **RARE** IT IS FOR AN EMPLOYEE TO SUBMIT **VOLUNTARILY** FOR **DRUG SCREENING**? YOU'D HAVE TO BE ON **DRUGS** TO WANT TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT!

THAT'S WHAT I'M **AFRAID** OF, DR. LINSKY. I KEEP HAVING THESE **MISSING TIME** EXPERIENCES. I CAN'T **REMEMBER** DOING STUFF THAT I'VE **CLEARLY** DONE.

OKAY, THEN. ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVE SO I CAN TAKE SOME BLOOD.

THANKS, DOC.

WHATEVER.

SO, MY WORK IS DONE, THE PROTOTYPES ARE BEING FABRICATED. I'M FREE TO RELAX. SO NOW WHAT?

I FEEL I SHOULD TRUST GREPINI, BUT AT THE SAME TIME HIS USHERING ME OUT THE DOOR MAKES ME WONDER. HAVE I OUTLIVED MY USEFULNESS?

STOP BEING SO PARANOID, ALDO.

PARANOID? PARANOIA IS FREQUENTLY CAUSED BY DRUG USE. JESUS. I SHOULD JUST GO HOME AND TAKE A LIE DOWN.

--PROGRESS HAS THE DEPARTMENT MADE?

--ANY SUSPECTS?

--CLOSE TO AN ARREST?

ONE QUESTION AT A--

EXCUSE ME, PRESSING MATTERS TO ATTEND TO! I'LL ARRANGE A CONFERENCE LATER. GOOD DAY!

3C 3C

THIS IS CALAMITOUS! LET'S GET TO THE SQUAD ROOM!

I KNEW IT COULDN'T LAST.

GET THAT *$Δ@ING MIKE OUTTA MY FACE!

GULP!

I KNEW I COULDN'T KEEP THEM AT BAY! I KNEW IT! Y'SEE? HAH?

THE PRESS ARE MAGGOTS. HOW I HATE THEM.

NEW YORK POST

GRISLY MURDERS MOCK POLICE

CAPTAIN HARDY

DAMN IT.

HOW MUCH DO THEY KNOW?

THEY KNOW ENOUGH TO MAKE US LOOK BAD. THEY'VE GOT NAMES, DATES, THE WORKS.

OKAY, KELLAWAY, I GOT YOU ASSIGNED TO THIS CASE TO BRING IN THAT EXTRA SOMETHING, SO MAKE GOOD ALREADY! I WANNA NAB THE CULPRIT RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING ME LOOK BAD!

UH, RIGHT, SIR!

OKAY, HERE'S WHAT YOU GUYS'VE DONE: YOU'VE BROKEN DOWN THE MEETS-THE-EYE ESSENTIALS, BUT YOU'RE INTERPRETING THEM WRONG. PLUS, YOU'RE OVERLOOKING SOME MAJOR FACTORS HERE.

IZZATSO?

WHAT, PRAY TELL, ARE THOSE?

FIRST OFF, YOU DIDN'T WRITE DOWN THAT EVE KOPFSALAT WAS A RETIRED U.S. MARINES OFFICER. SMALL WONDER SHE GOT A FEW GOOD SHOTS IN AT OUR GUY...

WE GOT HER SERVICE RECORDS, WE JUST DIDN'T PUT 'EM ON THE BOARD. THE BOARD IS FOR VISUAL EVIDENCE, WISE-GUY.

THIS IS GARBAGE, SO WE START WITH A CLEAN SLATE. ALL THE BUZZ WORDS YOU'VE WRITTEN DOWN POINT TO THE WRONG PUZZLE PIECES.

YOU ARROGANT--

TEMPER! LET THE MAN SPEAK!

FEH.

YOUR SEVEN AGES OF MAN THEORY IS A LOAD OF CRAP!

OH?

YOUR SEVEN DEADLY SINS THEORY IS ALSO WRONG, DUKE!

SO, WHAT, PRAY TELL, IS THE PATTERN YOU'VE DEDUCED?

THIS IS ABSURD. WHEN I LEFT TODAY-- WHICH I DON'T REMEMBER HAVING DONE--I ONLY HAD TWO OF THESE REPLICA MASKS. NOW I'VE GOT SIX. WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

EVERY TIME I LOOK AT ONE OF THESE THINGS I FEEL SOMEHOW *IT'S* RESPONSIBLE FOR MY *PROBLEMS*. BUT *THAT'S* ABSURD, TOO.

MAYBE THE REST OF THE WORLD'S BAD NEWS WILL TAKE MY MIND OFF *MY* LITTLE MICROCOSM'S PROBLEMS.

NEW YORK POST

CHARMING. WHO'RE THE LUCKY STIFFS?

SPORTS BACK

TOP STORY GRISLY MURDER

NEW YORK POS

BAH! WHO *NEEDS* TO KNOW? IT'S TOO *GRIM*. GUESS I'LL JUST TAKE IT *EASY* LIKE GREPINI SUGGESTED.

=YAWN=

SPORT

THIS GUY IS TRYING MY PATIENCE, I GOTTA TELL YA.

ZZZZZ

SPORT

Y'KNOW, SPORTNIK, IF THERE'S ONE THING I CAN'T STAND, IT'S AN INGRATE!

WHO--? WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

HALL OF VENGEANCE

IF YOU'D JUST READ THE PAPER, MAYBE YOU'D SPARE ME THIS SELF-AGGRANDIZING HORN-TOOTING I'M ABOUT TO DO.

PAY THE ADMISSION, SKINFLINT!

TICKETS

OH MY GOD...THESE PEOPLE LOOK LIKE--

THAT'S RIGHT, MY BOY, STEP RIGHT UP AND SEE THE RESULTS OF YOUR--OUR HANDIWORK! YOUR FORMER TORMENTORS, THE NOW RECENTLY DEPARTED BARDARD THESP CLUB CASUALTIES!

GAVIN BECHER? HE'S DEAD?

WELL, HE SURE AIN'T ALIVE, NUMBNUTS. WHERE'S YOUR HEAD, FRED? IT'S LIKE YOU DON'T REMEMBER THE DISMEMBERING.

SURE I HATED THOSE CREEPS, BUT THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. I MEAN, I WAS TICKED OFF WHEN I GOT THAT POSTCARD, BUT--

BUT ME NO BUTS, SAMMY. DEEP IN THAT FEVERED NOGGIN OF YOURS IS A FESTERING POOL OF RESENTMENT. I AM MERELY AN ENABLER, BUT YOU ARE THE ENGINE THAT DRIVES ME. US.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN "US"? I DIDN'T--

COOKIT, CHEESER, I'M JUST A LOWLY MYSTICAL ARTIFACT. IT'S THE WEARER WHO BRINGS WHAT I ENABLE TO BEAR. IF YOU'RE A WELL-ADJUSTED GUY, I MIGHT JUST REDECORATE WITH ELAN. IF YOU'RE A GUY WITH ULCERATING EMOTIONAL BAGGAGE...

...THEN YOU'D BETTER WATCH OUT!

GAH! WHAT A CRAZY...

...DREAM?

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A DREAM WALKING? WELL, I HAVE...♪

THE EIGHT REINDEER?!? THAT'S YOUR BRILLIANT THEORY?!? SANTA'S EIGHT REINDEER?

WHAT ABOUT RUDOLF? DO WE GET A RUDOLPH? HA!

FINE. LAUGH ALL YOU WANT, YOU IDIOTS.

I'M NOT LAUGHING, BUT YOU'D BETTER NOT CALL ME AN IDIOT IF I AGREE WITH MY MEN.

YOU DO WHAT YOU LIKE, BUT I'M RIGHT. I KNOW THE TWISTED SENSE OF "HUMOR" THIS THING HAS. BENIGN OR MALIGNANT, IT ALWAYS HAS A SENSE OF WHIMSY.

SO LEMME HAVE YOUR THEORY AGAIN.

OKAY, ONCE AGAIN IT'S LIKE THIS: HOPPER, THE FITNESS NUT, IS DASHER... BECHER, THE CAPITALIST TWINKLE-TOES, IS DANCER ...SHASTA, THE FLAMBOYANT HOMOSEXUAL, IS PRANCER... KOPFSALAT, THE FEMME FATALE, IS VIXEN... AND LASTLY--SO FAR-- CANNIGLIARI, THE PERJURING PURGER IS COMET.

Hopper - Dasher
Becher - Dancer
Shasta - Prancer
Kopfsalat - Vixen
Cannigliari - Comet

THAT'S THE ONE I CAN'T SEE. HE WAS A JUDGE, LIKE MY THEORY WOULD SUPPORT. HE WAS A GLUTTON, LIKE SAM'S WOULD PROPOUND. WHY COMET?

THAT WAS WHAT CEMENTED IT IN MY MIND. SURROUNDING CANNIGLIARI'S BODY WERE A BUNCH OF CANS OF COMET CLEANSER.

Hopper
Becher
Shasta
Kopfsalat
Cannigliari

IT'S LIKE THE OLD SCHOOL YARD DITTY...

COMET, IT MAKES YOUR MOUTH TURN GREEN, COMET, IT TASTES LIKE GAS-O-LINE, COMET, IT MAKES YOU VOMIT, SO BUY SOME COMET AND VOMIT TODAAAAYYYY!!!

HE'S SINGING.

HE'S A NUT.

I GOT THE LAB RESULTS BACK FOR YOU. CANNIGLIARI WAS FORCE-FED **COMET** AS AN IPECAC.

THE "**NUT**" WOULD LIKE TO GET GOING WITH THE CASE, IF YOU DON'T MIND.

GO ON, THEN.

THE NEXT FACTOR IS **AGE**. THEY'RE ALL VIRTUALLY THE SAME AGE **AND**...

...THEY ALL WENT TO THE SAME HIGH SCHOOL, EINSTEINS!

ONE WAY

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A DREAM WALKING? WELL, I HAVE...

SEXXX

Rüger's Adult Pare

GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALE!

A GRACIOUS GOOD **EVENTIDE**, FELLOW ENTHUSIAST OF **COMMERCIALIZED EROTICA**!

WHATEVER.

SEX PARTY

LAD, LAD, YOU **MUSTN'T** GRUMBLE! TO WORK IN A PLACE OF PURVEYANCE SUCH AS **THIS** MUST GIRD THE **LOINS** AND **SOUL** FOR **TUMULTUOUS COVEMAKING!** YES?

WHATEVER. **LOOK**, JUST FIND WHAT YOU WANT AND **BEAT IT**, HMMM?

OFFIC

I SEE A VERITABLE **TORNADO** OF SALES HAVE BEEN MADE, STOUT YEOMAN! THAT MUST GIVE A **MATCHMAKER** LIKE YOU A **WARM** FEELING.

"MATCHMAKER"? YOU SOME KINDA **COMEDIAN**? I SELL **PORNO**. NO **LOVE CONNECTIONS** TO BE FOUND **HERE**.

LET US NOT **SPLIT HAIRS**, SONNY, **SHORT** AND **CURLY** OR OTHERWISE. THIS ESTABLISHMENT TRAFFICS IN LOVE.

I DON'T KNOW **NOTHING** ABOUT **LOVE**, MORON.

GET OFF MY COUNTER, JERK.

IS THAT ANY WAY TO TREAT A FELLOW **ACOLYTE D'AMOUR**? WE'RE **ALL** BROTHERS UNDER THE **SKIN**... EVEN **WORMY**, **TATTERED** SKIN LIKE YOURS.

SAY, **IDIOT**, I DON'T COME 'ROUND YOUR JOB AND KNOCK THE **WIENER** OUT OF **YOUR** MOUTH. LOOK, FIND WHAT YOU WANT AND **GET LOST**. I'M **PRACTICALLY** OUT OF BUSINESS, ANYWAY.

CORRECTION: YOU'RE COMPLETELY OUT OF BUSINESS! NYAH-HAH-HA!!!

HOLY $#%@!!!

OH MY GOD, YOU'RE THE *MANIAC* THAT KNOCKED OFF THE OTHERS! *HELP!*

SO, AT LEAST *SOMEBODY* FOLLOWS THE *NEWS!*

THOSE OTHERS --*GAVIN*, *NICK*, *EVE*, AND *CURTIS* --WERE ALL *HIGH-LIVERS!* WHY KILL *ME*? MY LIFE *SUCKS*, ANYWAY!

AMMM. DON'T FORGET *ViGGO*.

YOU KILLED *VIGGO*, TOO? BUT *WHY*? LAST WE ALL SAW OF EACH OTHER WAS *HIGH SCHOOL*. WHO'D CARRY *THAT* KINDA *GRUDGE*? C'MON, *LOOKIT* ME. *LIVING* IS *MORE* OF A PUNISHMENT, DON'T YOU THINK?

AMMMM.

THEN LET'S CONSIDER THIS ONE A *MERCY KILLING*. NO?

GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALE!

AAAAAAGH

THIS IS IT! IN THIS YEARBOOK! LOOK AT THIS PICTURE!

1980 Bar Harbor High School

YOU SEE THIS? ONE OF THESE REMAINING PEOPLE IS OUR KILLER.

YOU TWO CHUMPS SHOULD GATHER YOUR WAGERS UP AND PAY ME!

WE COULDN'T DO THAT, KELLAWAY. IT WAS A FRIENDLY BET.

BESIDES, BETTING IS ILLEGAL IN THIS CITY.

WE'VE GOT TO GET IN TOUCH WITH ALL FOUR OF THE REMAINING FOLKS IN THAT PICTURE.

BUT IF ONE OF THEM IS THE KILLER WE DON'T WANT TO SCARE 'EM OFF.

PLUS, IT MIGHT BE SOMEONE AFTER THE WHOLE BUNCH OF 'EM. SOMEONE NOT IN THE PICTURE.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU GUYS, BUT OUR SHIFT WAS OVER TWO HOURS AGO. I'M NOT SAYING LET'S STOP WORKING THE CASE, BUT I NEED A LITTLE DINNER AND SHUT EYE. I'LL DIVVY UP THE FILES AND--

FINE.

SLEEP?!? NO THANKS. SLEEP IS FOR WUSSES.

BOY, IS THAT KELLAWAY ONE TURGID SONUVABITCH.

YEP. HE'S SMART, I'LL HAND HIM THAT, BUT, BOY, WHAT AN A-HOLE.

GET SOME REST, PARD'.

YEAH. KISS MARIA FOR ME, SAM.

I ENVY YOU, SAM. A NICE WARM' DINNER, A NICE WARM BED, AND A NICE WARM WIFE TO COME HOME TO.

PHOTOCHOP

CITY

ME? I'M OFF TO PICK UP A HERO AND SOME PORN FOR COMPANY.

SEVEN

BRAD PITT · MORGAN FREEMAN
SEVEN

LT. PETRILLO, I'S GLAD TO SEE YO'! SOM' TERR'BLE GOIN' ON AT ROGER'S!

ONE WAY

HEY, SMITTY, SHUT UP. YOU THINK I WANT PEOPLE KNOWING I ASSOCIATE WITH DREGS LIKE YOU? WHAT'S UP?

SEXXX

GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALE!

I HOID A SCREAM F'OM ROGER'S, SO I LOOK IN AN' DERE'S DI GREEN DUDE JUS'--

"GREEN DUDE"?!? OH JESUS!

RUN TO THE STATION HOUSE, SMITTY! FIND LT. KELLAWAY AND TELL HIM WHAT YOU SAW!

I THOUGHT Y'ALL DI'N'T WANT NO ONE KNOWIN' I KNOW'D YO'!

JUST DO IT!

WELL, I WAS PLANNING ON COMING HERE ANYWAY. OKAY, MITCH, MAKE YOUR MOVE!

FREEZE, POLICE!!!

OH...LORD. UM, DON'T MOVE. COME DOWN FROM THERE. YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!

NOT TODAY, SHERLOCK, NOT TODAY!

OFFI

HE'S WHERE?!?

Rodger's Adult Paraphernalia Emporium
GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALE
GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALE
LOVIN S
THERE HE IS!
ALONE.
CALL OFF YOUR **DOGS**, HE'S **VAMOOSED!** BUT I SAW HIM **REAL** GOOD.
POLICE
YOU **HAD** HIM AND HE GOT **AWAY**?!? YOU--
SHUT UP, KELLAWAY, I'M **NOT** IN THE MOOD. HE WAS UP AND OUT THROUGH THE **ROOF** IN TWO SHAKES.
BUT YOU GOT A GOOD **LOOK** AT HIM.
YEAH... AND **HE** GOT A REAL GOOD ONE AT **ME**, TOO. I FELT IT RIGHT IN MY **COLON**.
COWARDICE **LIVES** IN THE ALIMENTARY CANAL.
SHUT UP, KELLAWAY, **I'M** NOT IN THE MOOD **EITHER**.

SO, WANNA GO **BACK** THERE AND TELL US WHAT HAPPENED?

NOT PARTICULARLY. IT'S FUNNY HOW **DIFFERENT** IT IS IF YOU'RE THERE AS A **WITNESS**. IT'S HARDER TO DRAW BACK AND VIEW IT **CLINICALLY**.

YOU GUYS MAKE ME **SICK**.

SHUT UP, KELLAWAY, **WE'RE** NOT IN THE **MOOD**!

KINDA KEEPS **TOPPING** HIMSELF, NO?

HE DOES GET AN "**A**" FOR EFFORT. I'LL GIVE HIM **THAT**.

EATING HIS **HEART** OUT. YEAH, OLD **GREEN-FACE** IS A REAL **SYMBOLIST**.

MAYBE--MUCH AS I **HATE** TO SAY IT, MAYBE I'M **WRONG** ABOUT THE **REINDEER** THING. LOOKING AT HIM, I'D DEFINITELY SAY **CUPID**, BUT THIS GUY DOESN'T QUITE FIT THE MOLD.

YOU? WRONG? HOW DO YOU MEAN?

THIS GUY IS **MUCH** OLDER THAN THE OTHERS, HENCE A **KINK** IN MY **CLASS-REVENGE** THEORY.

THE GREAT KELLAWAY WRONG?!? SAY IT AIN'T SO.

MUCH AS I HATE TO SAY IT, KELLAWAY'S REINDEER THING IS CORRECT, IN SPITE OF WHAT MEETS THE EYE.

OH?

AT FIRST GLANCE, IN ALL THESE CASES, SAM AND I BOTH SEEMED RIGHT. THIS ONE, TOO. SAM'S DEADLY SINS LOOKS RIGHT--ENVY. CAREW IS EATING HIS HEART OUT.

MY SEVEN AGES THING ALSO LOOKS RIGHT FOR THIS -- CAREW LOOKS OLD. BUT CUPID IT IS, NO DOUBT IN MY MIND.

WHY'S THAT? THIS GUY IS OLD.

I KNEW THIS VICTIM, SORT OF. I'M EMBARRASSED TO OWN UP TO IT, BUT I WAS COMING HERE TONIGHT TO DO SOME RECREATIONAL SHOPPING. THE VIC'S NAME IS RODGER CAREW. BELIEVE IT OR NOT, HE'S THIRTY-FIVE.

WHAT?!?

NO WAY.

ROGER WAS A REAL SAD CASE. FACT IS HE PROBABLY WOULD'VE DIED SOONER THAN LATER, ANYWAY. SEE, HE HAD A WEIRD STRAIN OF PROGERIA. YOU KNOW, THAT AGING DISEASE SOME KIDS GET. MAKES 'EM LOOK LIKE LITTLE OLD MEN?

THIS GUY WAS THIRTY-FIVE? OUCH.

BUT PROGERIA USUALLY AFFECTS BABIES BY THE END OF THEIR FIRST YEAR. THIS GUY...

LIKE I SAID, A MUTANT STRAIN. ROGER GOT IT LATE. OR SOMETHING LIKE IT. CHECK THE YEARBOOK.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

WHAT DO YOU **MEAN** THERE'S **NO DRUGS** IN MY SYSTEM? THERE'VE **GOTTA** BE!

NEVER HAVE I SEEN SOMEONE SO **DISAPPOINTED** TO FIND OUT HIS TEST RESULTS WERE **CLEAN.** I'D THINK YOU WERE ON **DRUGS** IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER.

YOU DON'T **UNDERSTAND,** DR. LINSKY. IF I'M **NOT** ON DRUGS, THEN I'M LOSING MY **MIND.** I'M HAVING THESE **MISSING TIME** EXPERIENCES LEFT, RIGHT, AND CENTER.

THAT **IS** DISTURBING. PERHAPS YOU MIGHT WISH TO SEEK OUT **PSYCHOLOGICAL** HELP. I COULD RECOMMEND...

HMMM...YEAH, **MAYBE.** I'LL GET BACK TO YOU, DOC. I WANT TO THINK SOME ON THIS MATTER.

FAIR ENOUGH. CALL ME IF YOU NEED ME, ALDO.

I'M **NOT** ON DRUGS. THEN I'M LOSING MY **MIND.** IT'S THAT SIMPLE.

IT'S ALL BEEN SINCE I BOUGHT THAT **TIKI** STUFF. I--

OOF! HEY. SORRY, PHIL. DIDN'T SEE YOU COMING.

NO PROBLEM, DUDE. I WAS JUST COMING DOWN 'CAUSE I HEARD YOU WERE HERE. I GOT SOME-THING TO SHOW YOU.

I *STILL* CAN'T BELIEVE GREPINI IS GOING FOR THESE DESIGNS. HE JUST GAVE ME A *BIG* THUMBS UP *AND* A *RAISE* FOR *TIKILAD* AND *TIKIGAL*, HERE.

WHATTAYA THINK, ALDO?

GREPCO TOYS
MARKETING

UH, THEY LOOK SWELL, PHIL. ACES.

COULD YOU SAY THAT WITH *LESS* CONVICTION, ALDO? WHAT'S *UP* WITH YOU, MAN?

I DON'T KNOW, PHIL, I *REALLY* DON'T. I'M HEADING HOME.

I DIDN'T MAKE THE *CONNECTION* YESTERDAY LOOKING AT THIS GROUP PHOTO, THAT *THIS* RODGER CAREW WAS THE *SAME* ONE *I* KNEW. HE LOOKS *YOUNG* IN THIS PICTURE. I SHOULD'VE PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I MEAN, HOW *WELL* DID YOU KNOW THE GUY? WINK, WINK.

NOT WELL, *REALLY*. BUT WELL ENOUGH TO KNOW HE HAD THAT *DISEASE*. WHAT CAN I SAY? I BOUGHT PORN THERE. SUE ME.

WELL, WITH US OFF TO TALK TO *DONALD DECAPOTORTO* AND KELLAWAY OFF TO *GINA MAZARIN* AND *ALDO KRASKER*, HOPEFULLY WE'LL TURN UP *SOMETHING*.

LET'S HOPE SO, BEFORE THE LAST THREE GET KNOCKED OFF. OR *TWO*, IF IT'S NOT INCLUDING *RUDOLF*. IN WHICH CASE, ONE OF *THESE* THREE...

YEAH.

I GUESS I'LL CATCH UP WITH YESTERDAY'S BAD NEWS.

SPORT

AH YES, THE GRISLY MURDERS. SO, WHAT'S THE 411?

EXP

GRISL

MURDER

MOCK

POLIC

NO...NO...NOT... IT CAN'T...THEY COULDN'T BE... OH, JESUS...

PORT

SOMEONE'S BEEN KILLING THOSE SADISTIC THESP CLUB BASTARDS. SOMEONE WOULD HAVE TO HAVE A PRETTY FIERCE GRUDGE TO DO THINGS LIKE THIS.

...AND I HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA WHO THAT SOMEONE MIGHT BE.

SOMEONE WHO'D LIKE TO FORGET THEM, BUT CAN'T WITHOUT BEING CONSTANTLY REMINDED...

BUT HOW? I WOULDN'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

I COULDN'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT. I'M NOT STRONG ENOUGH.

WHY WOULD I WASTE THE TIME ON OLD ENMITIES LIKE THAT?

WHY ASK WHY?

DON'T THINK I'M A **SICKO**, BUT IF KELLAWAY IS RIGHT-- AND I THINK HE **IS**--I ALMOST DON'T WANT TO PREVENT THESE LAST MURDERS.

WHAT?!?

WELL, **DASHER**, **DANCER** **PRANCER**, **VIXEN**, **CUPID**, AND EVEN **COMET** WERE PRETTY LITERAL-MINDED INTERPRETATIONS. WHAT DO YOU DO WITH **DONDER** AND **BLITZEN**? HMMM?

HERE WE ARE, THE **DECAPOTORTO** RESIDENCE.

LET'S SEE IF **HE'S** STILL AMONG THE LIVING.

DON'T EVEN JOKE.

C'MON, DONNY, WE HAVEN'T GOT ALL DAY. **ANSWER** THE BUZZER.

IT'S BEEN FIVE MINUTES. TRY THE **SUPER'S** BELL.

RIGHT.

N.Y.P.D., SIR. BUZZ US IN. OFFICIAL **POLICE** BUSINESS.

=krakk= HOW I KNOW JOO WHO JOO **SAY** JOO ARE? =Krackle=

=GROAN= JUST **OPEN** THE **DOOR**, PAL!

DON'T MAKE THIS **HARDER** THAN IT'S GOTTA BE!

BZZZZZZ!!

YOU CAN LET GO OF THE **BUZZER**, CLOWN. **WE'RE IN!**

CLEARLY.

SHOW'S OVER, **PEDRO**. GO ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS.

GOD, I **HATE** WALK-UPS. HE **WOULD** LIVE ON THE **TOP FLOOR.**

CRASH!

UPSTAIRS!

OH HELL!

HEY, YOU **CRAZY**? YOU ALMOST **HIT** ME! YOU NO CAN **PARK** HERE!

YOU TELLING **ME** THE LAW? **SHUT UP!**

JUICE HOT DOG

MARKOWITZ, MARTINETTI, **MAZARIN**? ROOM 1326. I **SHOULD** LET GREEN-FACE HAVE HIS WAY WITH HER. ONE LESS FREAKIN' **LAWYER** WOULD BE A SERVICE TO MANKIND.

I'M CURIOUS, HOW MANY OF YOU ARE **LAWYERS**?

I AM.

SO AM I.

AS WELL AS I.

ME TOO.

COULD SOMEONE PRESS **THIRTEEN** FOR ME?

CERTAINLY.

LAWYER COOTIES. YECCH.

HEY!

OUTTA MY WAY, FLATFOOT.

"FLATFOOT"? YOU LAWYERS CAN SMELL 'EM A MILE AWAY. HAH? WELL, I THINK I JUST RECOGNIZED YOU TOO, HONEY!

I'M BUSY, PAL. MAKE AN APPOINTMENT IF YOU NEED A CHIN-WAG WITH ME.

YOU'VE GOT TWO SECONDS TO GET YOUR PAW OFF ME BEFORE I SLAP A BRUTALITY SUIT ON YOUR ASS.

GINA MAZARIN, I PRESUME. OTHER THAN BEING UGLY ON THE INSIDE, YOU STILL LOOK PRETTY DAMN GOOD ON THE OUTSIDE.

FLATTERY WILL GET YOU NOWHERE, COP. THAT'S SOME GRIP YOU'VE GOT. IF I SEE SO MUCH AS ONE TINY BRUISE OR STRIATION, I'LL SEE YOU IN COURT, BANK ON IT.

NICE. I COME TO WARN THE SHARK ABOUT GETTING EATEN BY SOMEONE WITH SHARPER TEETH, AND THIS IS HOW I GET TREATED.

COME AROUND HERE TRYING TO PREVENT THE DEMISE OF A LAWYER? WHAT WAS I THINKING? GRUMBLE, MUTTER...

WAIT. DON'T GO.

I APOLOGIZE.

HUH?

A LAWYER ***APOLOGIZING***? WHAT NEXT? WHEN DO YOU PLAN ON RELEASING ME FROM ***YOUR*** VISE-LIKE GRIP? YOUR ***PAW***...?

LET'S GO TO MY OFFICE. I THINK I KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE.

TAKE A SEAT.

NO THANKS, I'D RATHER ***STAND***. SO, YOU WERE GOING TO TELL ME WHY I'M HERE.

RIGHT. SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE ***BARDARD*** MURDERS, I INFER.

YOU INFER CORRECTLY. SO, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TELL ME THAT I DON'T ALREADY KNOW?

BAM BAM BAM

OPEN THE ***DOOR***, DECAPOTORTO! COME ON, DONALD, OPEN THE DOOR, ***DAMMIT!***

I'M COMING IN, DONALD! ***ONE...TWO...***

GO GET 'EM, TIGER!

WHOA, NELLY!

THANK GOD!

UM, IT'S UNLOCKED. COME ON IN, OFFICER. HEH.

DROP THE SWORD, FREAK. NOW.

IF YOU SAY SO, OFFICER.

NO.!!!

WHAT?!? YOU TOLD ME TO DROP THE SWORD. YOU DIDN'T SAY WHERE. SHEEESH, THERE'S NO PLEASING SOME PEOPLE.

GUH.

YOU GREEN-FACED, BLACK-HEARTED BASTARD!

NO, MITCH, NO! AW, @%*#!!!

BAM BAM BAM BAM

UGH.

I GOT HIM.

YOU SURE AS HELL DID, PARD'. DAMN, MITCH, THIS ISN'T GONNA PLAY WELL TO HAROY. WHAT A MESS.

WHAT A NIGHTMARE. I DON'T SEE HOW A SAMURAI BEHEADING ADDS UP TO ANOTHER REINDEER.

WHO WAS THIS GUY? WHAT WAS THIS GUY? I'M GONNA CHECK FOR A PULSE. MAYBE IT'S--

--NOT TOO LATE, WERE YOU GOING TO SAY? LET'S HOPE NOT! I'D HATE TO SEE THE PATIENT GO BEFORE HIS TIME!

GAHH!

"ALAS! POOR YORICK. I KNEW HIM, HORATIO; A FELLOW OF INFINITE JEST..."

Y'KNOW, OFFICER, WE'VE GOTTA STOP MEETING LIKE THIS. IN ACTING CLASS I'D DO MEDITATIONS AND IMPROVISATIONS. I'D FIND MY "BE". I'D BE A BEE, I'D EVEN STOP AND BE A TREE...

...BUT I DRAW THE LINE AT A BLEEDING SWISS CHEESE!

OKAY, PAL, GRAB A CLOUD! I MEAN IT!

SAAAAY, WAITAMINUTE, I AWREADY DONE DIS SPEECH, AWREADY.

YOU GOT IT, SERPICO!

THE HELL?!?

TOODLES!
OW!!
YOWTCH!
KRA-KABOOM!
ZAAAP!
OH, AND AS FOR THE REINDEER THING... DON DECAPOTORTO...
DON DERCAPITATED! HAR HAR HAR!
SO IT'S A STRETCH! SUE ME!
ALL MY LIFE I'VE HATED LAWYERS. I ALWAYS THOUGHT THEY WERE LOWER THAN POND SCUM, LOWER THAN A COCKROACH'S BELLY. BUT YOU, HONEY, YOU TAKE THE CAKE.
DON'T JUDGE ME, KELLAWAY.
DON'T JUDGE YOU?!? YOU, IN YOUR OWN SICK, CRUEL, SADISTIC, DISGUSTING WAY, ARE AS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF YOUR FELLOW ALUMNI AS THE ACTUAL KILLER!
DON'T JUDGE YOU? HOW DARE YOU SAY THAT!
WHAT KIND OF SICK TWIST WOULD PRINT UP FAKE REUNION INVITES JUST TO DELIBERATELY NOT INVITE THE PERSON THEY WERE SENT TO?
IT WAS A JOKE.

A JOKE?!? TELL THAT TO YOUR DEAD FRIENDS! A JOKE! I DON'T KNOW IF THERE'S ANY LEGAL PRECEDENT. BUT I'LL SEE YOU ROT IN JAIL FOR THIS!

THERE ISN'T AND YOU WON'T. STOP BADGERING ME AND GET KRASKER!

I'M OUTTA HERE!

DEEDLE-DEEPLE-BLIP!

GINA MAZARIN. UH-HUH. HE'S RIGHT HERE.

HEY, KELLAWAY, IT'S FOR YOU!

HE GOT AWAY AGAIN?!? WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU TWO? YOU SHOT HIM AND... UH-HUH. I SEE. NO, WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY. RIGHT, I'LL MEET YOU THERE.

HE'S ON THE LOOSE? YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME HERE ALONE! I WANT PROTECTION! I DEMAND PROTECTION!

SO BUY A CONDOM.

MANIAC!

IDIOT!

VROOM!

OUTTA MY WAY!

F*CKING A-HOLE!

NATURAL JUICE

HOT DOG

HOT DOG

SCREECH!

THERE'S MY BOY! ALDO, MY LAD, HOW ARE--

JESUS, IS THIS MY OFFICE, OR YOURS?!?

OH GOD, OH JEEZ. I'M SO SORRY, MR. GREPINI. I DON'T KNOW WHY I SAID THAT. I...I...

NOW, NOW. WE MUSTN'T TALK THAT WAY TO UNCLE GAETANO. HEH HEH. STRESS GETTING TO YOU, LAD? TAKE A LOAD OFF, ALDO.

PLEASE FORGIVE ME, GUY. I'M UNDER... I DON'T...

WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER, M'BOY. I WON'T BE NEEDING ANOTHER PROLONGED STREAK OF GENIUS FROM YOU FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER FEW DAYS. HEH HEH. THAT'S A JOKE, SON.

THANK GOD I COULD GET RID OF HIM. JESUS, GETTING RID OF PEOPLE IS APPARENTLY MY STRONG SUIT. IT'S ALL COMING BACK TO ME. THE DREAMS WEREN'T DREAMS. I'VE BEEN KILLING THOSE PEOPLE. ME...

...US. BUT NOT ANY MORE. I'M PUTTING AN END TO THIS.

SO HE'S *DEFINITELY* IN THERE?

ABSOLUTELY. WE'VE GOT MEN AT ALL POINTS OF EGRESS, SO *HE'S* IN THERE, ALL RIGHT.

MY BOYS WERE *VERY* DISAPPOINTED LAST TIME. IT'S NO FUN IF WE'VE GOT OUR *TOYS* AND CAN'T *PLAY* WITH 'EM.

WELL, WE PICKED THE RIGHT SPOT TO *PLAY* WITH *TOYS*, PAL. *THIS* TIME WE *NAIL* HIM.

YEAH, WITH EVERY *NAIL* WE'VE GOT.

JEEZ.

GOL'.

THAT'S THE *GOOD* TOY.

LET'S GO *KICK* SOME *GREEN-FACED BUTT.*

AMEN.

HALLELUJAH.

ON WHAT FLOOR WOULD WE FIND A *MR. ALDO KRASKER*?

UH... *SEVENTEENTH* FLOOR, SIR. M-MAY I BE EXCUSED?

CLEAR THE LOBBY.!

YEAH, BEAT CHEEKS.

MAKE SURE ALL THE ELEVATOR BANKS AND STAIRWELLS ARE BEING WATCHED. MAKE SURE--

EXCUSE ME, BUT DO I LOOK LIKE A FRIGGIN' ***ROOKIE***, HERE? I PROBABLY BEEN ON THE FORCE LONGER 'N ***YOU***, PAL.

BOY, DO I KNOW HOW ***YOU*** FEEL, BUD.

COPS IN THIS BURG SURE HAVE THEIR ***EGOS*** BRUISED EASILY. GROW SOME ***HAIR***, WHY DON'TCHA?

I'M TELLING YOU, PHIL, IF WE CAN JUST GET THE RIGHT ***PUBLICITY*** BEHIND THIS LINE, WE'RE SET, BUT GOOD.

MAYBE IT'S TIME FOR A NEW MARKETING STRATEGY, BUT THAT'S NOT MY DEP--

MR. GREPINI! ***MR. GREPINI!*** ***POLICE*** HAVE ***STORMED*** THE BUILDING! EVERYONE IS ***FREAKING OUT!***

COPS ARE IN THE RECEPTION AREA. THEY'RE GONNA ESCORT US OUT OF THE ***FIRE EXITS!***

BUT WHY?

I'M NOT WALKING DOWN ***SEVENTEEN*** FLIGHTS OF STAIRS. A MAN OF MY ***AGE*** AND...UM, ***GENEROUS*** PROPORTIONS.

I THINK I'LL HAVE A ***WORD*** WITH THEM. SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT.

THAT SHOULD DO IT.

OKAY, SO I CALLED THE COPS FROM A PAY PHONE. THEY SHOULD BE HERE BY NOW. LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO TO REMEDY THIS SITUATION.

AND *YOU'RE* GONNA *HELP, THIS* TIME.

GOOD *HEAVENS*, WHAT'S ALL THE *HUBBUB* ABOUT?

WE'RE LOOKING FOR A *MURDERER*, NAME OF *ALOO KRASKER*. KNOW HIM?

ALOO?!?

THIS WAY, MA'AM.

OH MY GOD.

BIG CITY SWAT POLICE

ALOO IS WANTED FOR *MURDER*? BUT--

I ASKED YOU A *QUESTION*, PAL, AND I WANT AN *ANSWER*. WHERE *IS* HE?

HE'S BACK THAT WAY. HIS OFFICE IS AT THE *END* OF THE HALL. ROOM *1702*.

YOU GUYS LOOKING FOR ME? HERE I AAAAAMM!

THERE HE IS!

ALL RIGHT! LET'S GET HIM, BOYS!

"ALL VISIBLE OBJECTS, MAN, ARE BUT AS PASTEBOARD MASKS... STRIKE, STRIKE THROUGH THE MASK!"

DON'T DO IT! DON'T PUT ON THE MASK!

...HERMAN MELVILLE, MOBY...

HE'S DOING IT! BLAST HIM!

...DICK.

YEE-HAAH!

WHOOOIIEE!

STOP IT! CEASE FIRE! OVERKILL! CEASE FIRE!!!

JESUS!

HOLY CATS!

CHRIST ALMIGHTY.

:SIGH: ALDO KRASKER, THE *EIGHTH REINDEER*. SHOULD'VE BEEN *MAZARIN*, BELIEVE ME.

SO *THAT'S* BLITZEN. WHAT A MESS.

NOW TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO *DESTROY* THIS THING FOR *GOOD*.

I'M FOR THAT.

OH *NO* YOU *WON'T!* THAT'S *EVIDENCE!*

WHAT THE--?!? YOU IDIOT!

I'M AN *IDIOT*, AM I? WELL, *GUESS WHAT*, KELLAWAY? THE CASE IS *CLOSED* AND YOUR SERVICES ARE NO LONGER *REQUIRED* HERE. WHY DON'T YOU BEAT IT BACK TO *EDGE CITY!*

YOU *UNGRATEFUL SONUVABITCH!* I OUGHTA...

DON'T BOTHER, KELLAWAY.

SAVE YOUR BREATH.

YOU'RE NEVER GONNA WIN A *PERSONALITY CONTEST*, KELLAWAY, BUT YOU'RE A *GOOD COP*. TAKE *THAT* HOME WITH YOU.

I SUPPOSE. YOU TWO AREN'T TOO BAD, YOURSELVES.

DAMNED WITH FAINT PRAISE. LATER, KELLAWAY. *MUCH* LATER.

AT LEAST I KNOW THAT THING'LL BE LOCKED UP TIGHT. BUT *SOMEDAY* I'LL DESTROY IT. MARK MY WORDS.

AND NOW THE *PAPERWORK*.

:GROAN:

GET THIS OVER TO *EVIDENCE CONTROL*.

YES, SIR!

THERE GOES THE *BEST* DESIGNER I EVER HAD. I'M *RUINED*. *AGAIN*.

I *DUNNO*, BOSS. PLAY THIS RIGHT AND THE *PUBLICITY* ALONE COULD MAKE "TIKI TOWN" *HUGE*.

GRE?CO TOYS

YOU THINK?

I DON'T SEE WHAT THE FUSS WAS ALL ABOUT. IT'S JUST AN UGLY MASK.

PROTOTYPE #5 KAMISHI

THAT WAS QUITE A BROUHAHA HERE YESTERDAY, HUH?

PERSON DPT

TIKI

FedEs

MAIL EXPEDITION

DON'T REMIND ME.

BOY, THAT GUY THEY CAPPED HERE YESTERDAY WAS SOME WACKO, HUH? GLAD HE'S OFF THE STREETS!

FedEx

MM-HMM.

SPECIAL EDITION

GHOST

by KOLL

SEE YOU MAÑANA, DOLL-FACE!

'BYE, JOE.

SONNEL PT

TIKI

MAIL EXPEDITION

THAT'S THE LAST OF 'EM.

CITY AIRPORT

THIS SIDE UP

CARGO

FedEx

Kar-Wai Manufacturing
Production Dept.,
Attn: Vivian Chung
11th Floor, West Tower
Industrial centre
123 Queensway
Central, Hong Kong

THE END

A mystical artifact from ancient times, known only as the Mask, will give whoever dons it nearly limitless power. With the mask on, there is nothing beyond your ability, which explains why every crook, criminal, and lowlife is itching to get their hands on it. The hunt for the mask goes from sea to shining sea, involving Voodoo, Amazonian tribesmen, ninjas, Mafiosi, crypto-Nazis . . . and the Bardard Thespian Club!

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DARK HORSE BOOKS

SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN... THIS MONSTER!"